

A Year with the
Bahais in India
and Burma



R. E. Speer

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INDIA AND BURMA



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BY

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"THE STORY OF THE BAHAI MOVEMENT."

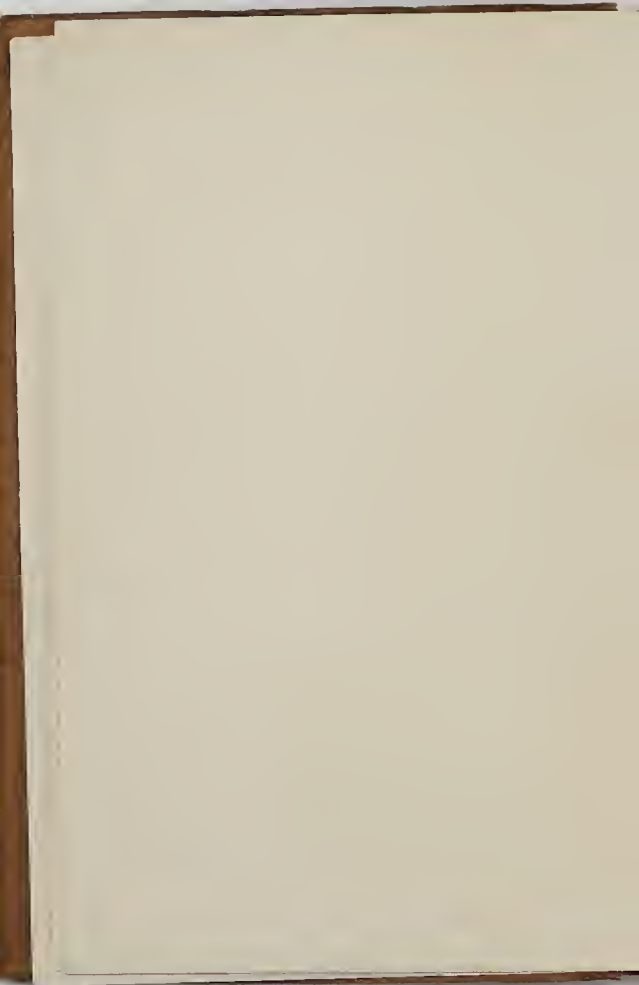
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PREFACE.

It is chiefly at the request of certain of my friends that I have written this account of my experiences in India during the year 1905.

I have confined myself, as much as possible, to relating my intercourse with the Bahais and what the Bahai Cause is doing in India and Burma.

This will, naturally, interest much more those who are directly in touch with this movement, but I feel sure that what the Bahai Movement is doing in India to promote the cause of unity and friendship among different peoples, will interest all thoughtful persons.

Everyone who has looked into the matter at all, must acknowledge that the Bahai Movement is enlightening and educating people in a very wonderful manner. Although all may not accept it, yet their eyes will be opened through it to the beauty and truth of other religions, and a realization will come to them that all the world is kin.

The Bahai teacher preaches universal religion; he does not speculate so much about miracles, the re-

surrection of the body, or what the future life is to be; but rather he shows how the miracle of hatred being turned into love may be wrought, of how the body by combating the evils of uncleanness, intemperance, and other vices, may be raised up, a pure and sanctified temple unto God, and how it is possible while walking on this earth to be in Heaven.

The Bahai Faith teaches that the great Universal Spirit, which is God, has manifested itself to every race and people at some time or other, and that it comes again and again, like the spring, to make all things new.

To me, the Bahai Religion is constantly unfolding and revealing new beauties; but it was necessary for me to go to the Orient to see it in its true, broad and universal spirit. For it is difficult in the Western world to get away from the name or thought of sect; but in the East, from all Bahais, goes forth the same sincere love for all humanity, irrespective of race or creed.

I have the greatest sympathy and respect for any man who believes he knows a way of bettering Humanity (whatever that way may be) and throws himself heart and soul into that work. The thing to be condemned is to be indifferent and stand by idly. I have friends who have said to me: "We belong to such and such a society, and are working for Unity as you are"; others express a desire for Unity without joining any organization. All are to be commended

for their efforts in this direction, but I hope those who read of what the Bahai Movement has already accomplished in India, to say nothing of what it is doing in other countries, will ponder carefully if there exists in the world to-day a greater instrument for bringing about the Unity and Brotherhood of man they are all wishing and striving for. The detached clouds that float about in the sky, can never bring the heavy fall of rain, it is only when they combine and become as one that the parched earth is watered and refreshed. Were the Bahai Movement a mere sect, it could not have accomplished what it has. It is the great Unifier, and for this reason demands that earnest men and women of every religion devote their lives to it.

The words of Baha Ullah : "Ye are all one soul, in many bodies ; ye are all the fruits of one tree, the leaves of one branch, the drops of one sea," is the golden rule by which Bahais try to fashion their lives. They know that to try to save "one's own dirty soul," as Charles Kingsley puts it, is not enough, but that our duty is to save the soul of the human race. How selfishness will shrivel up and sneak away, ashamed, when the dawn of this glorious truth illumines the world !

One day, while I was in Bombay, I met a Bahai who had just arrived from Yezd, where that terrible massacre of Bahais took place, not very long ago. To hear this massacre described by one who had

been there, and who was one of the Faithful, was to experience an emotion impossible to describe—one of aching pity, and yet triumphant joy, that men can rise to such sublime heights of heroism and unselfishness, and that love is victor over all things.

Is there not in such love as was there poured out, a more vital power and means for regenerating the world than in the ancient creeds, or any cold, calculating philosophy? The solution of the ills and troubles of the world lies in such self-sacrificing love. While living in the Orient, I have seen the effects of this love and service, which the Babais are so abundantly showing forth, and I earnestly believe that we in the West need this same spirit, which will bring about the regeneration of the world and the quickening of the nations.

SYDNEY SPRAGUE.

LONDON,

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AKKA.

THE week in Akka had just come to a close; my last day there had been one of the most beautiful. I had taken a walk with one of the Persians, and we had spent the afternoon in the garden of the Rizwan; a veritable garden of Eden it seemed to me in its luxuriant foliage, where every fruit could be eaten in safety.

We spoke together of the days when Baha Ullah himself sat under the large spreading tree near the fountain, and taught his disciples. We seemed to feel a spiritual atmosphere in that spot, where so many words of life had fallen from the lips of the great Teacher. I remember saying to my friend: "The pictures painted of the joys of Paradise, seem to me no more ideal than this," and he said: "Think of it—you an American, and I a Persian, and yet our hearts are quickened by the same love, and we sit in Paradise together."

Nothing had been said about my departure from Akka, and I had begun to hope that my stay might be indefinitely prolonged. Two or three things

encouraged this hops, I had been making myself useful in a small way. There is a school in Akka for the Bahai children; and while I was there, their regular teacher was away on a long journey, and I asked the Master* if I might teach them during his absence, to which he graciously consented.

The school is held in the room of a large inn, which is used by Mohammedan traders. The court of the inn was usually crowded with the donkeys and camels of the travelling caravans, and often our lessons would be disturbed by the discordant bray of some "locomotive of the Orient."

I taught the boys Grammar, Geography, Physiology, and other subjects, and found them all very bright and eager to learn. They would write out exercises in English for me, which afterwards they would show to the Master for his inspection. The Master takes a great interest in the progress of these boys, and often gives them helpful little talks, one of which I will reproduce here in the words of one of the pupils, which he wrote out in English for me and which I have but slightly altered.

THE HISTORY OF A SUNDAY MORNING.

How lucky I was and what good fortune I had yesterday in the morning. While all the scholars and

* Whenever the word "Master" is used it has reference to Abdul Baha (Abbas Effendi), the present Leader of the Bahai Movement.

I were assembled together in the school and reading our lessons, suddenly our hearts were filled with joy by hearing our Master's voice blessing the Believers; then He entered the school with shining face and smiling lips, and began to walk very calmly through the room, addressing us and saying: " Endeavour and strive eagerly that you may progress and advance rapidly. You are born in this Holy Day, attaining this great privilege by the favour of God, therefore you must not waste or throw away this Bounty and Mercy. Think always for that which is the way of getting more manliness and humbleness, and to love one another. You are like a small plant newly sown. If the rays of the sun reflect on it, and it is watered by showers of rain, there is no doubt it will by-and-by grow and at last become a very fruitful tree; but, if cold winds blow and the plant be deprived of the shining of the sun and the rain, it will certainly be withered and become a useless thing.

Now, if you occupy yourselves, for instance, in affirming some reasons for the Truth of this Holy Cause and how to deliver the Word of God to everyone, these things will support and strengthen you, and will prepare you for the good of this world and that which is to come; but if, God forbid, you lose your time in vain chattering and useless talk, and running hither and thither, these things, be sure, will never lead you to the way of salvation.

Never think whether you will have more or

less wealth, for riches will never guide any man in the right way.' 'O children,' addressed our Master, 'there is a matter which is very important, and that is this, let none of you at any time be puffed up with pride or despise any other being. Never, never do this, this is worse than all things. Man is a sinful blunderer, therefore he must acknowledge his faults.

His Holiness, the Blessed Bab, mentions in His Book that everyone must consider at the end of each day what have been his actions. If he finds something which would please God, he must thank Him and pray to be strengthened to do this good act throughout his life ; but if his actions have not been approvable or honest, he must earnestly ask God for strength to do better."

"And now," said our Master, "the report of your weekly work is good and free from blunder and fault, therefore I am greatly pleased and very happy. I want you to work for the sake of God, and not for my own interest. Therefore I am advising you, with the greatest love and kindness, for your own benefit and comfort."

These were our beloved Master's utterances yesterday in the morning.

* * * * *

The second day of my visit in Akka the Master called on me, in the little house where I was lodged

with two of the Persian Believers. The house was a plain, one-storey dwelling, consisting of three small rooms.

The Master inspected every article of furniture in the room, and found fault with one or two things, which he said were not good enough for me, ordering a carpenter to come, a new curtain to be brought. Surely, I thought, all this care bestowed on me must mean that I am going to stay some time, I did not realize that the Master is so thoughtful that he would not leave anyone uncomfortable for a single day if he could help it. But to go back to my last day in Akka. When I returned from my afternoon in the garden of the Rizwan, I was told that the Master wished to speak to me. I found him in the large room upstairs, which looks out on to the Mediterranean, sitting on the divan. He beckoned me to come and sit beside him, and after taking my hand and holding it in his, in a grip of steel, he said to me very impressively: "I wish you to leave for India to-night." This announcement came as a thunderclap out of a clear sky. It is true that I had wished before to go to India, and had written to the Master while I was in Paris, asking that I might be allowed to do so some day, but while in Akka I had forgotten everything except that I wanted to live there always. The Master knew my thought. "I want you to consult your own wishes in this," he went on, "I only desire your happiness. It will be a very good thing, a very good thing, if

you will go now to India, but if you wish to stay in Akka longer you may do so, otherwise you may go to India and return to Akka, sometime, to finish your visit, and you can study Persian, so that I may be able to talk to you when you come again without an interpreter."

The Master, as all his followers know, never commands or compels obedience, he only sweetly suggests, and his followers have found that to follow his suggestions will surely lead them on in the right way.

I thanked the Master for his confidence in me, and said, "if I could be of service to his Cause I would be glad to go."

"This is a very important mission on which I am sending you," he said. "The results of this journey will be very great; you may not see them, but in the future they will be known."

I realized the importance of it all. I was to be the first Western Bahai to go to the far Orient, and carry tidings that my fellow Believers in Europe and America are one in love and unity with their Oriental brethren. I was to see the literal fulfilment of that beautiful prophecy of Baha Ullah: "The East and West shall embrace as lovers."

I expressed to the Master my doubt as to my worthiness to carry out this great mission. "Do not worry," he said, "you shall be strengthened. My thoughts and my prayers will follow you. Remember

that the thoughts of the King are always with his generals who are fighting in the front rank."

During the whole of the interview, the Master never relinquished my hand, but held it in a vice-like grasp, so that I felt I should feel its impress all the days of my life ; and I felt, too, as though he were imparting to me some of his own strength and courage, which have never failed him during the half-century of his wanderings, exile, imprisonments, and persecutions. Truly, no prophet, or man of God, has endured what he has endured. The sword has been ever hovering over his head. The way to Calvary has been trodden many times. He has been betrayed in the house of his friends, nay, even in that of his very brother. But through all the mists and clouds of these sorrows and afflictions pierces ever the sun of his countenance—that radiant and divine smile of his which scarcely ever leaves his face, and which to see is to have a glimpse of "one like unto the Son of Man."

The Master gave me a few more special instructions about my voyage, and after giving me his blessing left me.

Before saying farewell to Akka, I wish to tell of an incident which occurred there, and which will illustrate better than anything the effect of the Bahai teaching.

One night during my stay there, the Master invited all the pilgrims present to supper. We were gathered together in a little upper chamber that evening—some forty men and women. Would that I had the pencil of a Raphael, or the pen of a Dante, to fittingly describe that scene! We sat round that common table, old and young, rich and poor, dark and fair; the various coloured robes and turbans giving striking colour to the scene. We represented five of the world's great religions, and many different races. We had come from places as far away as America on the one hand and India on the other. We had been complete strangers a few days before, but now we all felt a warmth of friendship and affection for one another.

The Master himself did not sit with us at the table, but served us, going from one to the other, heaping the rice on our plates and saying a kind word to each, thus bringing home to us the beautiful saying: "Let him that is greatest among you be your servant." Some of the Orientals there were strong, rough men, of humble birth, and I saw that they could hardly bear that the Master should wait on them. I knew that they felt as did Peter when Christ washed his feet. After the supper a Tablet was chanted in Persian, and then one of the oldest men there made a beautiful speech to us, the Westerners present; it was like the thanksgiving of an aged Simeon that his old eyes had witnessed such a scene and that he could

depart in peace. A certain Bahai from Washington replied for us. This supper, truly the Lord's supper in all its spiritual significance, will ever be to me the most beautiful and impressive incident in my life. Let those who sincerely desire love and unity to be brought about on earth, think of the significance of this scene which took place in a Turkish prison.

I left Akka at two a.m., in order to catch a boat leaving Haifa at an early hour in the morning. Two of the Persians accompanied me in the carriage. What a wonderful ride it was! The night was luminous with many stars—great brilliants, sparkling in their deep purple setting.

We drove through the dark, narrow streets of Akka, not a sound to be heard but the clatter of our horses' hoofs. At the gate of the fortress, the Turkish sentinel challenged us, but a satisfactory answer being given by my friends, we were allowed to pass. We drove along the beach of the sea, which is the road to Haifa. As we passed the garden of the Rizwan, the palm trees, stirred by the evening breeze, waved us an adieu. Then we forded the two shallow streams which Naaman boasted of to the prophet as the rivers he possessed, afterwards passing a caravan of camels, which moved in the dark like some strange uncanny creature of the night, and seeing fishermen with their nets hurrying for an early morning catch

Nearing Haifa, the first streaks of dawn began to appear, and then, with a suddenness which always surprises one in the Orient, the sun arose, and we entered the town by daylight. I found four Zoroastrian pilgrims there, Ardeshir, Khosroe, Bahram, and Feridoon, who were returning to India, and were much surprised to see me.

"The boat is very late," they said, "and we should have been off long before this."

The steamer had arrived at the same time as myself, so no time was lost in getting aboard, and I laughingly said to my friends: "You see I have given up my two good Mohammedan friends and have gained four good Zoroastrian ones in their place." As we sailed out of the Bay of Akka, I looked up at Mount Carmel, and saw the tomb of the Blessed Bab, shining in the morning light like a great pearl brooch on the emerald breast of the mountain. In the distance were the gleaming minarets and domes of Akka.

Here, on the holy mount, reposed that glorious Herald of Truth, the Dawn of this great Day; and there, a few miles distant, lived the third of the great Trinity of Revelators and Teachers, continuing that mighty work for the spiritualising of the world begun in Persia sixty years ago. Who could have believed, when the Bab arose in the black night of Persia like a glorious morning star, that its light would have endured and its beams spread over the whole earth?

Little did the persecutors who put his followers to the sword and finally gave him a martyr's death, think that the hated and despised sect would blossom forth as a universal and honoured religion. Could anyone have predicted that when his wounded and bleeding body was thrown out into the streets of Tabriz, to be dishonoured, that it would one day be brought by loving hands over hill and plain to the Holy Land itself, and repose for ever on God's mountain, and that fifty years after his heroic death, men and women from all parts of the earth would meet at his tomb and remember him in their hearts?

FROM PORT SAID TO BOMBAY.

ON our arrival in Port Said we were met by Bahai friends, who had secured a passage for us on one of the English merchant vessels. We were the only passengers on the boat, and the deck and a few cabins were placed at our disposal. The Persians transformed the deck in a very short time into quite a luxurious abode; rugs and carpets were spread, divans and beds arranged, the tea-service set out, and we had all that constitutes comfort in the Orient. The Red Sea and the Indian Ocean have a temperature warm enough even in the middle of November to make sleeping out of doors thoroughly agreeable, so that I enjoyed going to bed by moonlight and being awakened very early in the morning by the warm rays of the sun.

The steamer was heavily laden, and seemed to crawl along, so that the voyage took about nineteen days. The weather and the sea were perfect all the way and my fellow voyagers excellent company. Our party consisted of Jenab Adib, a well-known Persian

philosopher; Mirza Mahram, a Bahai teacher who has been chiefly responsible for the growth of the Bahai Movement in India; Mirza Isaac, a merchant of Bombay, and Mushkin Kalam, the famous writer who, together with his son and family, was going to India for the first time. Counting myself and the four Zoroastrians, we were sixteen altogether.

A splendid opportunity was afforded me during this long trip to learn Persian. I had already studied this language in Paris, but my knowledge of it was slight and I had had little opportunity of hearing it spoken, but now I set to work with a will, and my friends were all most kind in helping me, so that before the end of the voyage, I could follow a conversation and express myself fairly well. The cooking was mostly done by two of the Zoroastrians. We would sit in a circle on the deck around the samovar, Mohammedan, Christian, Zoroastrian, cheek by jowl, and, while the tea was being drunk, different experiences were related by each one and sometimes animated discussions took place. There would be sad and stirring tales of the Bahai martyrs of Persia, perhaps that of a relative of one of those present; there would be anecdotes told of the Bab, Baha Ullah and Abdul Baha; there would be discussions on theological and philosophical subjects. Then the conversation might take a lighter vein; Mushkin Kalam, though the oldest of the party (I think he was nearly ninety years old), seemed always brimming over with fun and good

spirits, and told many amusing stories which convulsed everyone with laughter.

There is one thing I have always remarked about the Persian Bahais, that notwithstanding the earnestness of their faith, their truly deep spiritual natures, their readiness to become martyrs for the Cause, that they always seem happy and enjoy a good hearty laugh ; they do not take their religion, as did our ancestors the Puritans, with long faces and acid countenances. Religion is a thing of joy to them, and they rejoice in the spirit and are glad.

BOMBAY.

ON the first day of December in the morning we arrived at Bombay and found some of the Bahais waiting to greet us on our landing. I was welcomed most cordially as though I were an old and dear friend.

The news that we had arrived spread quickly through the city, and soon large numbers of Bahais, chiefly Zoroastrians, were crowding the Mashreg-ul-askar to see their new brother from the Occident. The Mashreg-ul-askar is a large hall which they have rented for their meetings, and in a room off this I lived. There are three meetings a week held in Bombay, on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday evenings at six o'clock. The Tuesday meeting is reserved for the House of Justice, composed of nineteen members. I will speak of this later. The other two meetings are general, and there are, as a rule, eighty to a hundred men present. This does not constitute the numerical strength of the Bahais in Bombay, for many have shops which they are unable to leave

more than once a week, on which occasion another Bahai friend takes charge of the shop for them. The women have a separate meeting and there is a school for the children.

At the meetings Tablets are chanted (there was one young Zoroastrian boy who chanted especially well). Talks were given by different men. I spoke through an interpreter, and on Sunday evenings there were always strangers present, and their questions were asked and answered.

The Bahai community enjoy an excellent reputation for honesty, sobriety and polite and just dealing with their fellow-men. By these qualities they attract others to investigate their religion. Drunkenness has unfortunately become a vice among the Zoroastrians of Bombay, so when a Zoroastrian is seen never to touch liquor it is at once said he must be a Bahai. It is needless to say that these new converts to Bahaism are obliged to stand a good deal of opposition, and even some persecution from the orthodox Zoroastrian. I knew a school teacher who used to come to the meetings, though he had not openly proclaimed himself a Bahai. The Zoroastrian parents of his pupils suspected him, however, of a change in his faith, and so took their children out of his school, which left him penniless.

My experiences in other Oriental cities made me realize that it is no easy thing to become a Bahai in India. It often means a great sacrifice on the part of

the believer, a loss of friends, money and position. There is great solidarity, however, among the Indian Bahais, and this is always most wonderful to see when we think that these groups are composed of men of different castes and creeds who were but yesterday strangers, if not actual enemies—such, for instance, as the Zoroastrians and Mohammedans.

There has certainly been much reason in the past for followers of these two religions to have little love for one another; now a seeming miracle has occurred, and we see Zoroastrian and Mohammedan working together in perfect unity and harmony for the common good of the community. I am referring especially to the Council of nineteen, two-thirds of which are Zoroastrians, the remaining third Mohammedan. I attended some of the meetings of this body and wish to cite one or two incidents to show how affairs are managed by the House of Justice. A Zoroastrian Bahai shopkeeper came one evening and told the Council that affairs had been going very badly with him and that he was on the point of failure. The Council deliberated and decided that different members should give a part of their time each day to helping him in his shop, lay in a new stock of goods to attract customers, and give pecuniary help if necessary. This was done, and soon the man was on his feet again.

On another evening, a Mohammedan Bahai arrived in a state of much perplexity. He had just received from a Mohammedan friend a hundred lot-

tery tickets to dispose of, the lottery being for some Mohammedan charity. "I do not know what to do with them," the man said; "in the Kitab-ei-Akdas (book of laws) Baha Ullah has strongly forbidden gambling, but I am not sure whether a lottery would come under the head of gambling or not. If I accept and distribute these lottery tickets I may be breaking one of the laws; on the other hand, if I refuse them I will probably make this friend of mine, who is an influential Mohammedan, my bitter enemy." The nineteen members of the House of Justice consulted together as to what should be done. Finally a Zoroastrian member saw a way out of the difficulty, and he proposed that each one of the Bahais should take a ticket and then return them together with the hundred rupees, writing that they did not care to take a chance in the lottery, but they were very glad to help a Mohammedan charity. I wonder if all who read these lines will appreciate the beauty and the greatness of this act. It impressed me perhaps more than anything else that I saw in India. It showed forth two great results of Bahai teaching; first, that the Oriental Bahais look upon gambling, one of the most prevalent vices of the Orient, with aversion; secondly, that the feeling of animosity and hatred of Zoroastrians for Mohammedans which has endured for centuries, has become so modified that they are glad to help a Mohammedan charity. Truly this is no small fruit from the Bahai tree.

I left Bombay at the beginning of the year 1905. My stay had been so pleasant there, my friends so kind, that I said good-bye to them with real regret. I think everyone had shown me some kind act of attention; some would send me fruit, others sweetmeats and cakes, others flowers. As I spent Christmas Day in Bombay, some sent me gifts, knowing that was a Western custom.

On the day of my departure the great railway terminus of Bombay presented a very animated picture, for all who could get away from their work had come to bid me farewell. The sight of so many persons dressed in different robes and turbans, representing different races, saying such enthusiastic good-byes to a Western gentleman in a straw hat, attracted a good deal of attention and apparent curiosity from the other passengers.

A very unusual thing as well was my travelling with an Oriental dressed in the robes of a Mohammedan Mulla, for my travelling companion was Mirza Mahram, who had been with me ever since we left Port Said; he was a very congenial fellow-traveller and kindly helped me much with my Persian, also giving me valuable explanations of the Bible, Koran, Zend Avesta, and other holy books. The journey from Bombay to Calcutta was a very pleasant one, the railway carriages on the Indian lines are very spacious and comfortable, and the meals served at different stations very palatable; everything was new

and strange to me, so the long journey of two days did not seem at all monotonous or tiring.

We stopped a short time in Calcutta,* and I was glad to meet again Jenab Adib, who was now teaching there. From Calcutta we took a steamer for Rangoon, the voyage taking about four days, at the end of which we found our Bahai friends of Burma awaiting us at the pier.

* At the time of my visit, there were only a few Bahais in Calcutta, but now there is quite a large assembly.

RANGOON.

Before entering Rangoon we were subjected to a strict inspection according to the plague regulations, for the dreaded plague so rampant in India had not yet made its appearance in Burma, but two days after our arrival the plague broke out in Rangoon and numbers of deaths were recorded daily.

The city of Rangoon is one of the most cosmopolitan in the world. Though in reality a Burmese city, the number of Burmese inhabitants are less than the combined number of Chinese, Mohammedan and Hindu inhabitants. Every religion under the sun is represented there, and, as a rule, in large numbers.

The Buddhists have many splendid golden pagodas; the Mohammedans have fine mosques; the Hindus their strange looking temples; the Chinese many Joss houses; the Zoroastrians and Jews their well-built fire temples and synagogues; the Christians of every sect their various churches and meeting-places. I should imagine there was no place in the world where one could study the customs and rules of different religions so well as in Rangoon.

Each day in the week seemed to be a feast or fast day of one or the other of the religions. I saw the festivities of four different New Year's Days. The Buddhists celebrated this day very much as the Carnival is held in France and Italy—only, instead of throwing confetti, they pour water on each other. No one is respected on that day, not even the highest dignity of the land, and the only way to escape a ducking is to shut oneself in the house.

The Hindus have even a more disagreeable way of celebrating their festal day, for they throw a red fluid on each other which remains on their clothes for some time to come.

The Mohammedans celebrate the day in a more dignified manner, and instead of trying to ruin their neighbour's clothes, they try to outshine him in the gorgeousness of their raiment. They don their very best robes and fezes embroidered in gold, and pay each other visits and pass the day in merrymaking.

The Chinese New Year reminds one of the American Fourth of July, for crackers and fireworks form the leading feature.

It would fill a book were I to describe all the remarkable religious customs that I saw in Rangoon, and as my desire is to confine myself as closely as possible to the narrative of my experiences among the Indian Bahais, I will return to my friends whom I have left welcoming me on the pier.

I stayed in Rangoon at the house of Syed Ismael

Shirazi and his father, Syed Mehdi, Persians, formerly of Shiraz. Their house is a very large and handsome one, and here the meetings were held on the same evenings as those in Bombay.

I should like to speak here of the great hospitality and kindness that was shown to me during my three months' stay in Rangoon by the two noble gentlemen whose guest I was. It was largely through their earnest solicitations that I made my stay much longer than I had intended, and they did everything in their power to make my visit a pleasant one.

Here the Bahai Movement has achieved perhaps its greatest triumph, for in this most cosmopolitan of cities one is able to see representatives of six great religions sitting side by side at a common religious meeting and united in a true spirit of love and brotherhood.

The meetings, as I have stated, are usually held three times a week, but during the whole of my visit we had meetings every evening, and there was scarcely a time when the room was not well filled, often to overflowing, so that many had to sit in the garden. It was a wonderful and inspiring sight to see the room filled with Buddhists, Mohammedans, Hindus, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, and even an occasional Chinaman. Strangers came to make enquiries, not only at the evening meetings, but also at all hours of the day, eight o'clock in the morning not being thought too early in the Orient to

seek for Spiritual knowledge. Large numbers of Christians, both native and English, came to see me ; most of them I am afraid if not to scoff at least to criticise, but some remained to pray. There were both Roman Catholics and Protestants who became Bahais during my visit, and one of them was a missionary. Who, possessed of an open and unprejudiced mind, could help but be impressed at seeing that marvellous example of Bahai Unity, so strikingly shewn forth every evening?

"I cannot believe," said a missionary to me one night, "that all these men are really Bahais." "It is easy enough to find out," I replied, "you have but to ask them." The answer he received left no doubt on that score. The Bahai is never a luke-warm Believer : he has good reasons for his faith and he knows how to express them. There was, naturally, some opposition to my presence in Rangoon. The Roman Catholic priests forbade their flocks to come to the meetings, the Protestant ministers spoke against us. A Mohammedan Mulla preached openly in a city square, warning the Mohammedans to keep away from the Bahais, who possessed a power able to turn them away from the true faith. One ardent Buddhist used to come to the meetings with the sole purpose of drawing away the Buddhists, a Hindu came regularly to interrupt and argue against us. Perhaps one of the most remarkable cases of opposition was that concerning a young Jewish soldier of the British

Army. He had dropped into one of our meetings, and becoming interested, had returned again and again, and finally announced that he had become a Bahai, and a very ardent one, too, for he used to talk to his fellow Christian soldiers, and soon our meetings were made more interesting, and certainly a new touch of picturesqueness was added by having several young soldiers in their white and gold uniforms. Some sailors from the many foreign ships lying in the harbour also attended our meetings.

But to return to our young Jewish friend. It seems that great efforts had been made by army missionaries to convert him to Christianity, but without success. He had always remained true to the faith of his fathers. When, therefore, it became known that our young Jew had become converted to something that was not called Christianity, and was actually preaching it and converting others, great consternation and indignation were aroused.

One night our meeting was interrupted by three or four young soldiers entering, one of whom was an Evangelist who held revival services in the Army. He began in an excited manner to preach against the error into which his friends had been drawn. He challenged me to answer him, and when I tried to do so in a quiet way he would not listen, but continued his invectives, finally surprising everyone by falling on his knees and bursting forth into emotional and impassioned prayer, calling upon Heaven for some

miracle to turn his friends away from what he deemed error. I felt very sorry for him, for he was evidently in earnest. I felt sorry, too, that there still exist in the world such narrow and bigoted spirits who have distorted the broad charitable spirit of Christ's teachings into something so different. When the Evangelist had finished his prayer he called upon the three Bahai soldiers to leave their evil surroundings and return with him to the barracks. They remained fixed in their seats, and the poor man was obliged to confess himself defeated and to go away. "I wonder," said the Jewish soldier to me afterwards, "why this man who has tried so hard to make me believe in Christ, is so angry now that I do believe in Him." Alas, it is too often the Christ of the creeds that one is asked to believe in, and not the Christ of humanity.

There are many interesting incidents which occurred during my long stay in Rangoon, but were I to speak of them all, there would be little space left to recount my experiences in other Indian cities. I will mention but one or two others. One day, soon after my arrival, an Englishman called to see me and questioned me minutely about my object in coming to Rangoon, and what the teachings of the Bahai Faith were. He seemed interested in my replies and came again and again, finally saying that he believed all I told him was the highest and most beautiful Truth, and he could accept it all and call himself a

Bahai. Then he went on to say : " I must now inform you who I really am. I am a member of the Rangoon secret police, and it was my duty to find out about you, to see if your mission in India was a peaceable one, and one that would not lead to a native uprising. I little thought that my investigation would lead to my ultimate conversion." Mr. R. proved himself to be a kind friend and a devoted Bahai during the rest of my stay.

The friendly protection of the Bahais by the police in India is not a thing to be despised, for on one occasion it has been shown that, though India is governed by such a progressive and enlightened country as Great Britain, persecutions for religious beliefs are possible. I shall have occasion to speak later of a Bahai who narrowly escaped a martyr's death in the city of Mandalay.

How easy it is to excite the fanaticism of a crowd. I remember the anxiety of my friends one night while we were holding a meeting. Diagonally across the street from us was a Mohammedan mosque, and on that evening a large meeting was being held in front of it in the open air, the Imam preaching from the porch and the hundreds of Mohammedans standing or squatting in the road. The preacher's voice was so loud and clear that we could hear it across the road, and my friend told me he was preaching against Bahaism. I looked

across and saw by the flaring light, the excited face of the Mulla, waving his arms about, the swaying forms of the white-robed figures on the ground, and heard the pious ejaculations with which the speaker was occasionally interrupted. Ah, I thought, it needs but one word from that man to bring about a Bahai massacre. Even the fear of the English police would not restrain that crowd, now worked up to the white heat of hatred and fanaticism.

In violent contrast to the fanatical spirit existing in all of the religions in India, is the spirit of liberality, charity, and broadmindedness among the Bahais. Not once have I come across the least tinge of bigotry and narrowness, and this is the more wonderful when one considers that most of its adherents have been brought up in the strongest atmosphere of fanaticism. To us, brought up in the broad spirit of Western thought, this should be a constant lesson if we are ever tempted to show an intolerant spirit to any who do not think as we do. Consider how difficult it must be for a Mohammedan to acknowledge that there could be anything of truth in religions such as Brahmanism or Buddhism, which he has always regarded with abhorrence as rank idolatry. "Think of it," once said a Persian Bahai to me, "I once thought I was polluted if I was obliged to shake hands with a Christian--now I am glad to shake hands with all the world."

What a great and noble work are these pioneers of the Bahai religion doing! They are laying the foundation of a mighty edifice which shall endure throughout all ages; the stones of love and harmony and unity and brotherhood which they are laying shall never be swept away, but the human race shall rise upon them to higher things—to its true destiny.

I left Rangoon in a rather exhausted condition; for the strain of talking to people day and night, for three months in extremely hot weather, was very great. It often happened that our meetings would last until one o'clock in the morning, and our meals were held at most irregular hours—whenever the coast was clear and there were no visitors.

MANDALAY.

I ARRIVED in this city, together with my ever faithful companion, Mirza Mahram, the first week of April. Here I spent six weeks of pleasant days. I lived among the native Burmans, and the simple and primitive way of living appealed greatly to me. The whole life of the people is passed out of doors: men, women, children, goats, chickens, all together—the children running about naked. Of a morning I would look out of the window of my little bamboo hut among the trees, and see the women cooking dinner, and the men weaving silk at very primitive looms. Then, in the evening, they would sit out under the luminous stars, while one would play a weird, appealing air on a rude pipe, and very happy and contented they all seemed. How complicated we make our lives, what slaves we are compared with

these people! "Not what we are, but what we shall be thought," is the question with us. Everything with us must be bought for a price, there all is free as God meant it to be.

The Bahais number several hundreds in Mandalay and are nearly all native Burmans, and a very gentle, kindly race of people they are.

In Rangoon the Bahais are drawn from all classes, and some had had excellent educations. There were doctors, lawyers, and employees in the English government among them. In Mandalay, the larger number of Believers are drawn from the silk weavers, and few of them could speak English, though all the children are brought up to do so.

While I was in Mandalay, plans were being drawn up to build a Bahai school for the children. The idea is to build a meeting place and school in one. At present the meetings are held in a private house, that of a Burmese widow where I was staying. The room is much too small for the large number who congregate together twice a week, so those who cannot find room in the house hold a meeting out of doors. In these meetings the women took part; this was not the case in Bombay and Rangoon where the conditions are different, but in Mandalay the Buddhist women have always been accustomed to a good deal of liberty and freedom, and now that they have become Bahais they naturally do not abandon that,

and their Mohammedan sisters who have also become Bahais are only too glad to enjoy their freedom with them.

There are some impatient reformers who have said to me: "I thought the Bahai Movement was going to improve the condition of Oriental women, but I do not see that it has." Such people must remember that the emancipation of women in the Orient is the most difficult of all reforms to bring about, because of the deep-rooted prejudices that exist. It is a thing that can only be done very gradually. This reform has a prominent place in the Bahai programme, but were the Oriental Bahai women suddenly to throw aside their veils and mingle freely in the world, it would simply stir up enmity and scandal and do more harm than good to their cause.

Baha Ullah has made a law that every girl should be educated as well as every boy. When the Oriental women are sufficiently educated and know what to do with their liberty, then, and only then, should they be emancipated. However, the meeting of Mohammedan and Buddhist women with the men in Mandalay is an answer and proof to all, that this will be the condition of affairs in the future, and that woman shall finally come into her own.

The children, boys and girls, of all ages, also take part in these meetings. They squat on the floor, their hands folded, listening attentively, a good model

for some of our restless Western children ; the women in their light pink and blue and green silk robes, their immaculate coiffure, usually crowned with wreaths of white roses, their delicate Japanese type of beauty, made a very pretty picture. The men were dressed in the native silk skirt and white flowing jackets, and silk turbans around their heads. After chanting the Tablets, someone would give a little talk in Burmese. I often addressed them through an interpreter, and it was inspiring to see their radiant spiritual faces turned to me. The meeting ended with tea and cakes being served, and then the pretty custom of children going round with baskets full of flowers and giving handfuls of roses and jasmine to each one. I doubt if any meetings in any other part of the world could be more impressive than these. The meetings of the early Christian Church must have been like this before religion became cold and formal and fashionable.

A remarkable testimony to the unity and harmony existing among these Mandalay Bahais was once given by a Mohammedan. There was a convention of Mohammedans from different cities meeting in Mandalay, and certain matters were discussed which ended in angry disputing among them. Finally a prominent Mohammedan got up and said : "I wonder why it is that we Mohammedans can never get together without coming to blows, while the

Bahai company has lived for years in the greatest peace and harmony, although they come from many different sects." Of course no one could answer him, but his question must have given them much food for thought.

In spite of this beautiful love, there is much animosity and opposition displayed against the Bahais by the other religions in Mandalay. It is a common saying that it is only necessary to go to one Bahai meeting to become a Bahai, so the greatest effort is made by religious leaders to keep their flocks from attending the meetings at all. Great anger was kindled against my Persian friend, Mirza Mahram, some five years ago, because of his remarkable success in converting people to the Bahai Faith. Finally some of the Mohammedans and Buddhists decided that they would make him leave the city or threaten his life if he refused. A band of hoodlums gathered together one evening and with sticks and stones proceeded to march to Mirza Mahram's house. When they reached it they found him waiting calmly to receive them. He spoke gently to them, but firmly refused to leave Mandalay. How he would have fared at the hands of the infuriated mob it is easy to imagine if a detachment of English soldiers had not arrived in time to keep order. The officer in command advanced towards Mirza Mahram and addressed him angrily: "What did he mean by

creating all this disturbance in Mandalay? Why did he come to preach some heretical schism and so anger the population?" Mirza Mahram explained to him that he was only doing what the early Christian teachers did when they were accused of the same things—that he was now being accused of, and he went on then to explain the true mission of the Bahai Religion, which so impressed the officer that his whole manner changed, and he held out his hand genially, saying: "There is nothing to find fault with in these teachings; if you get into any new trouble you have a friend in me, and I will order a special detachment of police to protect your house." "I thank you," replied Mirza Mahram, "but I do not wish for any protection, I have a Higher Protector than even the English government." However the officer insisted on placing his men around the house to preserve order, and they remained there several days. No more open attacks were made by the populace hostile to the Bahai Faith, but often some malicious hand would hurl a stone at some passing Bahai. During my stay in Mandalay I was never allowed to go out without some Bahai with me, for they feared some injury might befall me. It was generally known that a Western Christian Sahib was living among the Bahais as their friend, and this further enraged their fanatical enemies.

There is a statement which nearly all western writers on Oriental affairs make—it is this, that the

Oriental has no idea of truth or honesty as we conceive of them in the Occident. I have not seen enough of Orientals in general to either accept or refute this statement, but among the Oriental Bahais whom I did know well I found a sense of integrity and honour often higher than I have found in America or in Europe, as the following incident will show :—

One very hot afternoon a young Bahai walked to the post office, a distance of over two miles, to get some stamps for me. On his return he gave me the stamps and then said : " Now I must go back again." " But why?" I said, " Surely on so hot a day you don't want to take that long walk again?" " The man at the post office has given me four annas too much change," he replied, " and I must return it at once."

There is a beautiful passage of Baha Ullah's in the Tarazat (the Adornments) in which he describes Honesty as the greatest ornament of the people of Baha. " Honesty," he says, " is the door through which come the repose and peace of the world, and the maintenance of all things is bound up with it."

Towards the end of my stay in Mandalay, I received a letter from my old friend and brother Bahai, M. D——, of Paris, stating that he had arrived in Bombay and would soon join me in Mandalay. It was pleasant meeting him again and receiving news from the home circle of Bahais. I say home circle, for it was in Paris that I first became attracted to the Bahai Cause. I found

D——, as onthusiastic as I had been over the splendid roception given him in Bombay and Rangoon. Wo stayod nearly a week in Mandalay, he also being a guest of the Widow Mong Taw. I remember how amused D——, was that he could never get a glimpse of her. With all that sense of politeness which Frenchmen possess, he insisted that he must seo his hostess to thank hor for her hospitality. But tho widow could never be found. The most attractive and woll-cooked meals were sent to us from somewhere, and evorything was kept in perfect order, but the widow remained invisible. D——, began to think she was some mysterious being who had no earthly existence; when, the day before our doparture, somo friends brought her to see us she seemed much embarrassed, and on D——, thanking her profusely she said: "But I have done nothing at all; you would do the same for me if I came to seo you."

We had interesting talks with Buddhists and members of the Arya-Samaj, who invited us to speak at one of their meetings. Tho Arya-Samaj is a society rocently startod among the Hindus, and attempts to draw them altogethor away from idolatry and give them a Unitarian form of faith.

D——, Mirza Mahram, and myself, with perhaps a Buddhist and a Mohammedan Bahai, used to take walks through the streets of Mandalay, naturally attracting much attention, for it is not a usual sight in the Orient to see people in Christian,

Mohammedan, and Buddhist dress walking together chatting and laughing in a friendly manner. I remember one day when we were walking with a certain doctor, M. Ali, a devoted Bahai, a man of position and much respected, that we passed a group of Mohammedans standing at a corner; they beckoned to him and asked him who the Sahibs were he was walking with. "The venerable old gentleman is a Persian, born a Shia Mohammedan," he said; "one of the two men in European clothes is a Frenchman, born a Jew; the other, an American, born a Christian; while I, as you know, was born a Sunni Mohammedan. We have all laid aside the old names," he went on, "which once divided us, and we have become united and are friends and brothers through the teachings of Baha Ullah."

This striking and visible example of Bahai Unity made a great impression on these Mohammedans, as I am certain it did on many others. It became noised abroad that an unheard-of miracle had taken place. A Mohammedan, a Jew, and a Christian, had joined hands and were all teaching the same thing.

If those who read these lines could only realize what animosity exists between the different sects of Islam, such as the Shia and Sunni, which corresponds to the feeling between Roman Catholics and Protestant Christians in Western countries, they would realize how difficult it is to weld even these sects into one. Then, indeed, would they marvel at

the power of the Bahai movement, which has done not only this, but has gathered into one fold people of every creed known on the face of the earth.

Our departure from Mandalay was the occasion of a scene which will always remain in my memory. It was a worthy climax to the many wonderful experiences I had been having in India. We, that is to say, Mirza Mahram, D———, and myself, were to leave by the boat which left at the earliest streak of dawn. We had heard much of the beauties of the Irrawaddy River, and were anxious to return to Rangoon that way. On the eve of our departure, a farewell meeting was held. Every room in the house was full, and the crowd overflowed into the garden. After D———, and I had spoken a few words of farewell, an aged Burman, the oldest Bahai in Mandalay, arose, and with a voice that shook with emotion, made a most touching and beautiful speech. He told us what our coming had meant to all of them, how much they appreciated our visit, and he spoke of the barrier that had always existed between East and West, which was partly their fault as well as the fault of the English who governed them. He thanked God that he had lived to see the day when, through the manifestation of Baha Ullah, their hearts in the Orient, in far away Mandalay, had been united by so wonderful a love to the hearts of their Western brothers in Europe and America.

By this time, although it was after midnight, the

whole assembly, men, women and children, insisted on coming with us to the steamer. Some mistake had been made in ordering the carriages for us, and there were none to be found. "We will all walk," they cried—the distance was over two miles. We started off, a curious and picturesque procession. The light of a full moon made it almost as clear as day, and the bright silk robes of the Burmans shimmered and waved in the breeze, and it seemed as though some ethereal army of pink and white was being blown gently down the road. The effect was startling in its beauty. Before we had gone half-way some bullock carts caught up with us, and we finished the journey in these.

On reaching the river bank all grouped themselves around us to say good-bye. The solemnity and the beauty of that scene were indescribable. What a picture it was! The red fezes and the long white robes of the Mohammedans, the pink and yellow silks of the Burmans, the little children in their bright dresses, the women with their big white combs and wreaths of jasmine in their hair, standing under the waving palm trees flooded by the glory of the full moon. Again some kind words were uttered, and the tears were streaming down the faces of all as we said goodbye. I said to my friend D——, "Would that all the people of the world could see this; there would be no need of teachers to prove the truth of the Bahai

Cause, for this is its proof. Where such love exists, there is God." To think that a group of Buddhists and Mohammedans should weep at the departure of a Christian and a Jew from their midst!

We much enjoyed the restful three days' journey to Rangoon. The scenery along the river is very picturesque--the little villages among the palms, the many ruined pagodas, and a continuous background of blue hills.

RANGOON AGAIN.

MY second visit to Rangoon lasted about two weeks, and during that time D——, and I both gave public lectures, an interesting fact in connection with the lecture given by D——, being that it was arranged by Christians who had been attracted to the Cause during our stay, and the hall was lent by a rich Jew.

The lecture I gave was under the auspices of a Hindu society. I was much pleased to have been asked to speak before them, for I understood that I was the first Westerner, or one of Christian origin, who had been invited to address them in their own building. The letter from the secretary inviting me to speak ran thus: "We have heard that you are teaching very noble and beautiful ideas in Rangoon, and that you have much sympathy for our religion, Brahmanism, therefore we ask you to present your ideas to us."

On the day of my lecture about 150 Hindus, chiefly of the high caste of Brahmins, came to hear

me. After the lecture, some came up and told me how much they had been impressed by what I had said, and of their desire to read, study and know more of the Bahai religion; others asked that the lecture might be printed for circulation among their friends. This was afterwards done. Editors of different native papers asked me to write articles for them, which were translated into many languages. I remember my surprise about a month later, on arriving in Lahore to find one of these articles printed in a Punjabi paper; oddly enough, the article appeared on the very day of my arrival. Letters came to me from different parts asking questions about the Bahai religion; all this kept me very busy.

The time had now come for us to leave Rangoon, and we began to plan where we should go to next. A certain Hindu wished me to go with him to Madras, his native city, and speak there, which I had intended to do later, but was prevented. D——, was planning to travel through the North of India, stopping at several cities, and finally embarking at Kurrachee for Persia, and he urged me to go with him. Mirza Mahram also approved of this plan, and said he would come with us. I had not been told by the Master to visit the North of India, but I thought this would meet with his approval, for he had said to D——, when in Akka, "It will be good for you and Mr. Sprague to be together in India." Before we left Rangoon

our friends gave us a farewell picnic. We spent the day in a beautiful garden, belonging to one of the Bahais, outside the city. Refreshments were served, all sitting in a circle on the ground. Afterwards our photograph was taken, and in that group all the great world religions were represented. We were permitted to see at this time a beautiful tomb of white marble intended to hold the body of Baha Ullah: a similar one had been made by the Bahais in Burma and sent to Akka to contain the body of the Bab, but it had not been found advisable to send this one at present, so it is resting in the grounds of a Rangoon Bahai.

We said good-bye to our friends here with as much regret as we had done in Mandalay. D——, went on ahead to spend a few days in Calcutta, while I was to follow with Mirza Mahram, and meet him in Benares, but our plans were upset and I did not see D——, again in India. The weather was chiefly responsible for this.

The summer months in certain parts of India are made very cool and pleasant by the enormous amount of rain which pours down daily. These rains take place after the arrival of the monsoon. During the year 1905 the monsoon was much delayed, the month of June had come to an end with no prospect of rain. The papers were full of the terrible suffering caused in Calcutta and other northern cities by the excessive and exceptional heat and the drought. We had hoped by the time we reached Calcutta the

rains would have commenced, but D——, wrote that he had encountered such terrible and unbearable heat there that he was obliged to go on. In Benares and Lucknow he found it the same, so he hastened on to Kurrachee to take a boat for Persia. When Mirza Mahram and I arrived in Calcutta a week later we found the same condition of affairs. The heat was considered exceptional even for India; at least so the papers said. We spent a day in Benares, but I think if we had stayed longer we should both have been stricken down by the heat. Men were dying every day from its effects. The hot air which one inhaled seemed to scorch the lungs, and there was no escaping from it. We hurried on to Aligarh, the trip across the Indian plains being a terrible one; had it not been for the tatties, a sort of straw curtain over the windows which we continually dampened, I think we should have been roasted alive.

ALIGARH AND DELHI

WHEN we reached Aligarh the weather had changed, the monsoon had broken, and the rain was descending in torrents.

Aligarh is a small town, and is not usually visited by tourists. It contains, however, a very fine Mohammedan college, one of the largest Mohammedan institutions in the world. We stopped at Aligarh partly to see the Mohammedan Prince who was at the head of the college and who was a friend of Mirza Mahram, and partly to meet some Bahai students. The head of the College, the Nawab, was one of the finest gentlemen I have ever met ; he was a true nobleman, courteous and gentle in all his ways. He gave us a most cordial welcome, and during our stay of nine days we saw him daily. Every afternoon at five, when his work was finished, he would send his victoria to fetch us, and we would spend the evening chatting in his garden. His sympathy toward the Bahai Cause was very great, for he was a most broad-minded Mohammedan and realized the tremendous

need there is for reform in Islam. He made a brave fight for many years to make education more general among the Mohammedans, but he met with much opposition from the Mohammedan Mullahs, who look with suspicion on Western learning, thinking it leads to Atheism. The Nawab introduced us to the professors and scholars, and I made some good friends among them. One evening I was invited to a college debate, and asked by the president to speak. As the subject of the debate had something to do with education, I spoke warmly of the advantages of education in broadening the character, in uprooting bigotry and prejudice, and preparing the mind to receive the highest forms of truth. When I finished there was much applause, and one of the Bahai students whispered to me: "I am so proud and happy that you spoke that way, for it is generally known in the college that you are a Bahai, and this will make our Cause more popular and liked." In fact several of the students came to ask me about the Bahai Movement, and became very much interested.

The next stop on our journey was at Delhi. The Bahai Movement has not yet gained a footing in this old city of the Mogul Emperors, called the most fanatical Mohammedan city in the world, but we had some letters of introduction to certain prominent Mohammedans, so we thought of spending a week in Delhi to present them and then return later on to stay longer.

We met and had animated discussions with some of the leaders of Islam, including the head Imam of the big mosque, the Jumma-Musjed. One of the Mohammedans, a gentle old man, more broad-minded than the others, seemed to have taken a great fancy to me, and urged me many times to return and live in his house, which was one of the handsomest in Delhi; he said I could have my private apartments, and he himself would give me opportunities of spreading the Cause. This, as well as many other invitations from different towns of India, I was obliged to refuse owing to a serious attack of illness, about which I shall have more to say later. From Delhi we proceeded on to Lahore. There we were met by Mirza Mahmoud, who had been teaching in the Punjab during the last two years, and we stayed with him at his house, which was situated in the crowded native quarter.

LAHORE.

LAHORE is a great centre of missionary activity. Here the Americans have a large college, and there are numerous other institutions of learning.

Great interest was aroused by my coming, and many enquirers from all religions came to see us. Mirza Mahmoud is possessed of an unusually sweet and winning personality, and has made many friends in Lahore; even those who had not yet accepted his views, told me how much they admired his excellent character, and he is teaching continually by his beautiful life, which Baha Ullah has said in many of his Tablets is the best way of teaching.

I felt that there were great opportunities for work in Lahore, and planned to stay there some time. Two Hindu societies had asked me to give them lectures, and I had received invitations from Amritsar and Rawalpindi to visit those places. But, alas, for human plans, I had only been a fortnight in Lahore when I was taken ill with a severe attack of typhoid fever. The great heat I had experienced, the strain

of meeting and talking with so many people, had all told on me, and I had little strength to fight the disease. The first attack was followed by a relapse, and it was nearly six weeks before my temperature went down. At times I seemed hovering on the brink of the great Beyond, and as I look back and think of the terrific heat of the Lahore climate and of my own high temperature, it seems wonderful that my life was spared. In fact, the doctor had said: "I can do nothing for him, his life is in the hands of God."

Although my illness was a severe test to me at the time, I can now look back on it with pleasure, for it was the means of the bringing out and the making manifest of what stuff the Oriental Bahais are made.

Some Western writer has said that the Oriental is cowardly, and when a contagious disease appears he flees in horror from it, leaving others to their fate. How different was my experience. No one could have had two more devoted and loving nurses than I had in Mirza Mahram and Mirza Mahmoud; they tended me day and night, never thinking of their own rest or comfort or the danger they were running. I was not taken to a hospital, for the hospitals were overcrowded, there being a great epidemic of disease in Lahore. I could not, as the Doctor said, have received better care there than I had at the home of Mirza Mahmoud. Finally, these two good friends were completely worn out, and it was necessary for

someone else to look after me, so a telegram was sent to Bombay, and as soon as it arrived one of the Zoroastrians volunteered to come and take care of me.

Dear Kai Khosroe, when I saw his strong powerful form, his kind manly face by me, and felt his tender care, I already began to feel better. Alas, that I must record that his coming meant that he was to sacrifice his life for mine. Scarcely four days had passed, when he was stricken down with cholera, which was raging in Lahore, and died in less than twenty hours before my eyes. The two Mirzas were obliged to divide their attention between us, and they bravely ministered unto him until the last, holding the poor man possessed by so frightful and contagious a malady in their arms. I lived through all this, but the death of this good friend was a shock which it was difficult to recover from. I thought with many a pang of the heart, of the wife and children he had left behind—and he had done this for me—no, not for me, but for the love of God.

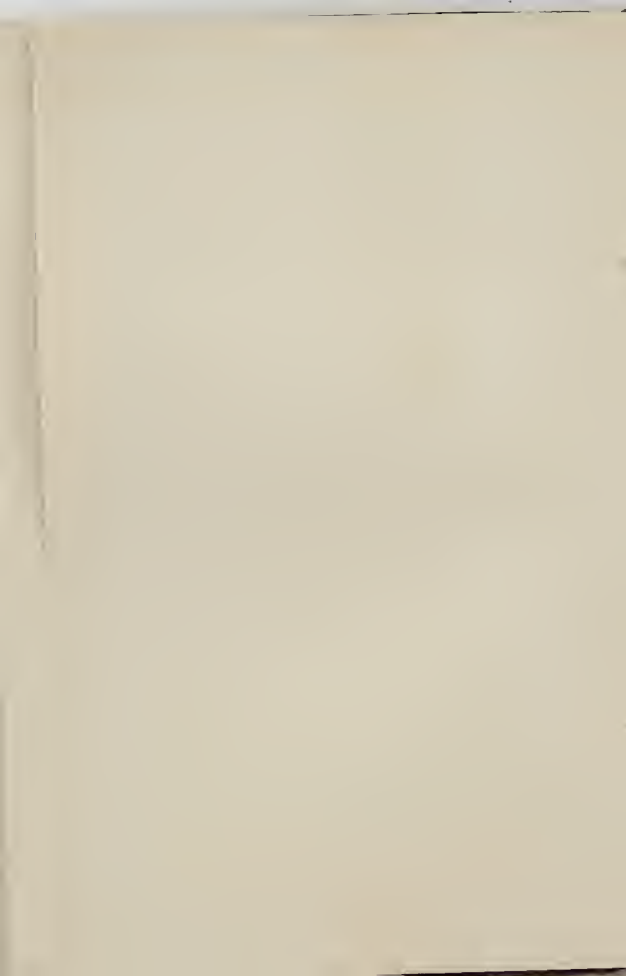
Other friends came and looked after me in turn. I remember one young Hindu who was especially devoted to me, he would sit for hours by my bed, saying nothing, but ready for any service. In his desire to cheer me he used to bring me presents from the bazaar, ranging from perfumery to sleeve links. The incongruity of these presents at such a time made me smile even then. I was told that special meetings had been held by all the Bahais in India,

and prayers offered for my recovery. As soon as it was possible for me to be moved it was decided that I should leave the unhealthy climate of Lahore and seek a cooler clime. I wished to go up in the Himalayas where a Sikh Bahai had invited me to visit him. It was thought, however, the trip would be too difficult, so I was put on a cot and taken by the rapid express to Bombay, attended by the ever-faithful Mirza Mahram, and the change to the much cooler atmosphere—for it was the rainy season—was very beneficial. Here, surrounded by the many friends whom I had left some eight months before, my health and strength returned. The father and two little sons of Kai Khosroe came to see me, and they came with tears of joy rather than of sorrow, happy that he had been able to render so great a service to the Cause. "He was a humble shop-keeper," they said, "and had no ability to teach, but you are able to go about and teach great multitudes; he could only give his life to serve the Cause of God, and he was glad to do it." Noble Kai Khosroe, you will always be remembered as the first Oriental friend to give his life for a Western Bahai brother.

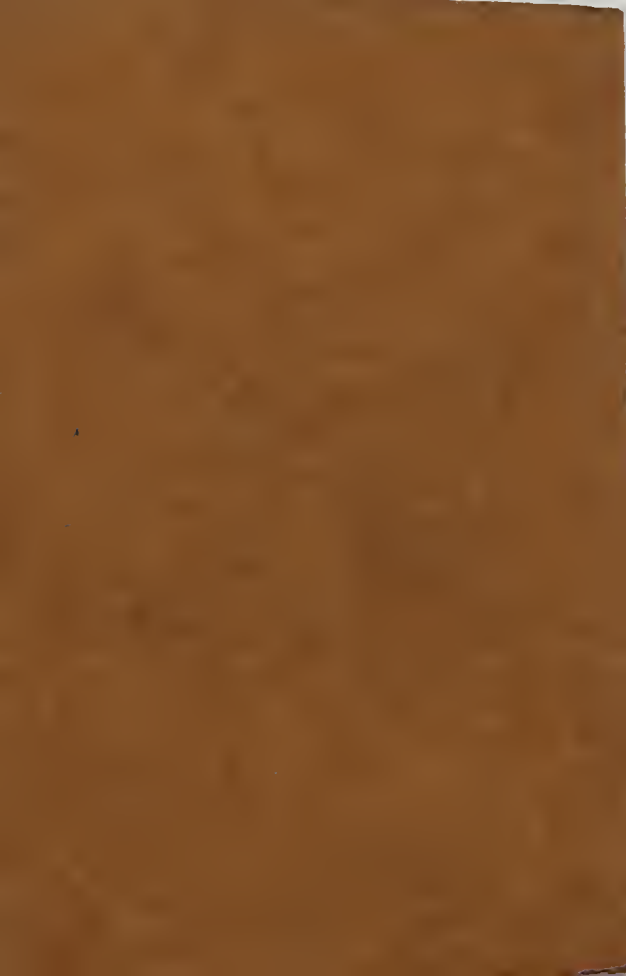
I had the pleasure of meeting at this time too Jenab Ebn Asdaq, a well-known Bahai teacher from Persia who had just arrived in India to teach.

I was scarcely well enough to walk alone when a telegram arrived from Akka saying it would be better to leave India and return to Europe. This

indeed proved to be the very best thing for me, since the fresh sea air and the quiet voyage were of the greatest benefit. During the voyage I used to lie in my steamer chair, close my eyes, and think of the wonderful year I had spent in India, and the kind faces of every colour and nationality would flash before me, and I would hear again their regretful good-byes, and see their eyes full of tears. I was glad to think that as a result of my work some had entered into the Bahai fold of Unity, and that the sympathy and love I had tried to show to all had been so liberally responded to, and that I had been brought into touch with so many of my Oriental brethren. Even some who had not become Bahais had said to me: "We have never opened our hearts to any Westerner as we have to you"; so that if I, a worker in a great Cause, have succeeded in removing some of the prejudice and misunderstanding which separate the Oriental from the Occidental, and have helped to make East and West advance but one step nearer to each other, then I am well content.





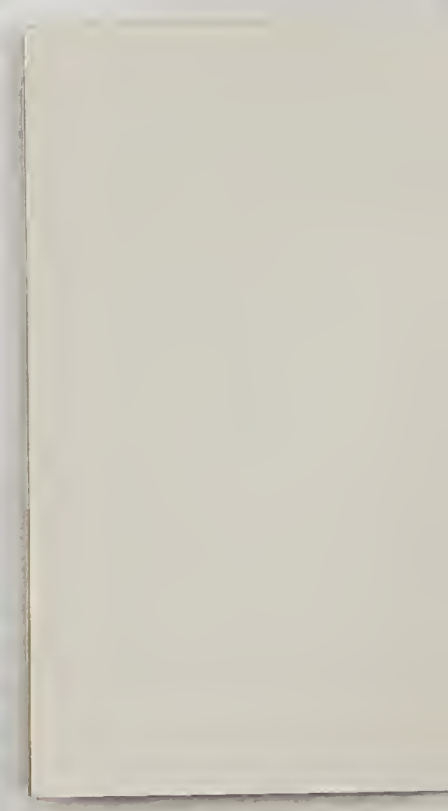


THE
MESSAGE OF
UNITY

THE BAHAI
MOVEMENT



THE MESSAGE
OF
UNITY



The Bahai Movement

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations. . . . That all nations should become one in faith, and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened. . . . These fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away and the Great Peace shall come. . . . Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind."

"O ye discerning ones of the people: Verily the words which have descended from the heaven of the will of God are the source of unity and harmony for the world. Close your eyes to racial differences and welcome all with the light of oneness. Be the cause of the comfort and the advancement of humanity. This handful of dust, the world, is one home: let it be in unity. Forsake pride, it is a cause of discord. Follow that which tends to harmony." *Baha'o'llah.*

"O CHILDREN OF MEN! Do ye know why We have created ye from one clay? That no one should glorify himself over the other. Be ye ever mindful of how ye were created. Since We created ye all from the same substance, ye must be as one soul, walking with the same feet, eating with one mouth and living in one land, that ye may manifest with your being, and by your deeds and actions, the signs of unity and the spirit of oneness. This is My

Counsel to ye, O people of Light! Therefore follow it, that ye may attain the fruits of holiness from the Tree of Might and Power."

Baha'o'llah.

"O SON OF SPIRIT! I have created thee rich: Why dost thou make thyself poor? Noble have I made thee: Why dost thou degrade thyself? Of the essence of Knowledge have I manifested thee: Why searchest thou for another than Me? From the clay of Love I have kneaded thee: Why seekest thou another? Turn thy sight unto thyself, that thou mayest find Me standing within thee, Powerful, Mighty and Supreme."

Baha'o'llah.

The object of the Bahai Movement is the religious unification of all people. The teaching has come into the world to fulfil all divine teaching of the past. It stands as the one goal toward which truth has always worked, through its appearance in the prophets sent unto various peoples of the past ages, and is the beginning of that age of divine enlightenment and peace, the coming of which has been the theme of all revelation--The Kingdom of God on earth.

Together with the prophecies which are recorded in the holy books of various peoples relative to the establishment of God's Kingdom upon the earth, are those pertaining to the coming of a great revelator and teacher, who would appear in the latter days, bringing the

people of different religions together and uniting their souls in the love of God.

This divine manifestation has been foretold in varying terminology, in accordance with the teachings of the various prophets and commensurable with the understanding of the people to whom they ministered. Thus in the New Testament of the Christians the second and triumphal coming of Christ is prophesied. In the Old Testament of the Jews the triumphal coming of the Messiah is foretold. In the Koran of the Mussulmans is found prophecy regarding the establishment of God's Kingdom on the earth, and so on, through the sacred writings of other religions, are found similar prophecies relating to this latter day.

In the coming of Baha'o'llah, with His forerunner, The Bab, and His "Branch," Abdul-Baha, all these various prophecies of the different religions have been fulfilled, and in the Bahai Movement, which emanated therefrom, is found the nucleus of that divine order of things which man has long expected.

On May 23, 1844, there arose in Shiraz, Persia, a young man, Ali Mohammed by name, who declared himself to be The *Bab, or the forerunner of "He whom God would Manifest"—a great teacher, who was soon to appear with manifest signs of divine power, through whose teachings the religious unity of all peoples would be accomplished.

Through His purity of soul and spiritual wis-

*"Bab" is the Arabic word for door or gate.

dom The Bab drew unto Himself many followers who in turn promulgated His doctrines with so much fervor that within a short time many believed and joined His ranks.

The Bab was immediately met by great opposition on the part of the Mussulman clergy, and at their instigation, was placed under military surveillance. In spite of this He continued His teaching, exhorting the people to holiness and sanctity of living, in order that they might be fitted to meet the Promised One, shortly to appear, and to become as mirrors which would reflect His spiritual perfection. Thus the first two years of His ministry passed, at the end of which time, He was seized, by the order of the clerical authorities, and thrust into prison. His imprisonment lasted four years, during which time He taught His followers through letters and epistles. This was followed by a trial in which The Bab was condemned to death upon the charge of heresy. He, with one of His followers, suffered martyrdom in the cause of truth in the city of Tabriz, Persia, on July 9, 1850.

The mission of The Bab being that of precursor of "He whom God would Manifest," the institutions and ordinances which He established were for the time being only. With the appearance of the Promised One, the followers (Babis), were commanded to turn their faces unto Him, when He, who was to come, would reveal His teachings, divine laws and ordinances, thus completing the foundation of The Kingdom on earth.

The Bab was not alone in being persecuted by the Mussulmans, for with His martyrdom came upon his followers troubles of the most dire nature. Over twenty thousand of these willingly gave up property, family and life rather than deny or recant their faith. In Persia, as late as 1901, there were one hundred and seventy souls martyred at one time in the city of Yazd.

During the days of the Bab's ministry, while His cause was being promulgated by His followers throughout Persia, there were many believers who never met with Him in person. Among these was Baha'o'llah, a young man of noble family, who warmly espoused The Bab's cause, publicly upholding and teaching it in Teheran. In 1852, shortly after The Bab's martyrdom, when the persecution of the Babis was at its height, Baha'o'llah, with others of the new faith, was imprisoned in Teheran, and later on with a number of Babis was sent in exile to Baghdad in Irak.

During the exile in Baghdad Baha'o'llah, through His teachings and spiritual insight, gradually brought calmness and assurance to the followers. As the movement gained strength the clerical authorities began to show fear. This led to an international arrangement made between the Turkish and Persian governments by which Baha'o'llah with a band of His followers was ordered to a more distant exile in Constantinople. In April, 1862, on the eve of His departure from Irak, Baha'o'llah declared Himself to be the one whose coming

The Bab had foretold, "He whom God would Manifest."

From Constantinople the exiles were sent to Adrianople, where they remained until 1868, when they were finally sent to the fortified town of Acca (Acre), a penal colony on the Mediterranean just north of Mt. Carmel in Syria. There in the land of Carmel, where "the coming of the Lord" in this latter day had been foretold by the prophets; Baha'o'llah lived and taught; many traveling from great distances to receive instructions from Him, while others received teaching through His writings.

The writings of Baha'o'llah are many. They consist of explanations, given to various inquirers, regarding His mission and doctrines; together with exhortations to His followers and certain advices and laws the pursuance of which is conducive to the best secular as well as spiritual welfare of mankind.

Thus it will be seen that with the coming of Baha'o'llah the mission and teachings of The Bab were fulfilled and completed; so from that time on the movement became known as the Bahai Movement, and the believers, hitherto called Babis, became known as Bahais. In the spring of 1892 the mission of Baha'o'llah being finished, He passed quietly from this world.

While during His ministry His revelation was complete, yet His cause was not explained nor established in the world in general. To this end Baha'o'llah, in His testament, as well

as in various parts of His teachings, commanded His followers upon His departure to turn their faces toward His eldest son, Abbas Effendi, whom He had chosen as their spiritual guide: "The Center of The Covenant" of God to the people of the world, the expounder of His teachings, the one who would establish His cause in the world, and the one upon whose shoulders His mantle would fall.

Abbas Effendi was born in Teheran, in Persia, on the 23d of May, 1844, the day upon which The Bab began His teaching. During all the trials and amid the vicissitudes of the mission of Baha'o'llah, His eldest son Abbas Effendi was at His right hand promulgating His cause and serving His followers. He was the first of all to recognize Baha'o'llah as The Promised One. He makes but one claim for himself, as to his spiritual station, that of service in the path of God. He signs himself "Abdul-Baha Abbas," which, being translated, is "Abbas, the Servant of God." Abdul-Baha is acknowledged by the Bahais as their spiritual leader, and the one to be emulated in the teaching of this great faith in the world. He, through his example, is bringing the spiritual life of Baha'o'llah within the reach of his followers, the Bahais. He is the first fruit of the consummation of God's Latter Day promise to the world, and he is the center from which the light is now being radiated to the world; therefore he in his mission lives and exemplifies his title of "The Center of The Covenant."

Abdul-Baha's life is one of active service to humanity. There is no element in the daily life of this world too small to receive his attention, and yet the great motive power manifesting through him is not of this world but is of God. He is working to serve God, yet by serving God he serves mankind. From his early childhood until his 64th year he was an exile and a prisoner;* yet the light of his life and teachings has reached to the far corners of the earth. From many countries have gone to him people of different beliefs to receive spiritual help, and upon leaving him they have returned to their various homes to share with others the joy and assurance of his spiritual message and to follow in his path of service.

Some of the Ordinances of the Bahai faith touch upon the following subjects:

Religious Unity. All men are free to believe and to worship as they will, but they are exhorted to unite in the universal faith of Baha, for only through spiritual unity will mankind attain the highest development.

Tolerance. The Bahais should not separate themselves from people who are not of their belief, nor should they denounce nor antagonize those holding views other than their own. They

*With the establishment of a constitutional form of government in Turkey, in the summer of 1908, all political prisoners throughout the Ottoman empire were liberated. Thus it is that now Abdul-Baha is no longer an official prisoner.

should mingle freely with all people and show forth their faith through love and service to their fellow men.

Universal Peace. Warfare should be abolished and international questions should be settled by arbitration. In order to facilitate international communication, one language should be chosen from those already existing, or one devised for that purpose.

Government. Representative legislation is most conducive to the welfare of the people. The people of Baha should be loyal and law-abiding citizens in whatever country they may dwell. They should not glory in that they love their country, but in that they love their kind.

Worship. Prayer supplemented by a pure and useful life in this world form the elements of true worship. Faith without works is not acceptable. Every man should have an occupation which conduces to the welfare of humanity, the diligent pursuance of which is in itself an act of worship.

Marriage. Celibacy and asceticism are discouraged. Man should marry and create a family and live in the world where he can show forth in his daily life the spirit which is in his soul. Monogamy, as the highest expression of justice, is taught.

Resistance. Harshness should be met with gentleness and hatred with love. With these weapons the Bahais will overcome all opposition.

The Church. In this Cause there is no priesthood apart from the laity. Each one who receives the spirit should share it with those whom he meets in daily life. Teaching is given without money and without price. Teachers are generally self-supporting, but occasionally they are sent forth to teach provided with the necessities of life by those who are desirous and able in this way to serve The Cause. Places of worship are to be provided for meeting and prayer.

Religious government. "The House of Justice," a central assembly, the members of which are selected by general vote, is to preside over the affairs of the Bahai world. Its work, apart from its purely religious character, has to do with charitable and educational matters and the general welfare of the people.

Temperance. In all matters moderation is to be observed. Man should not use intoxicating liquors as a beverage. The taking of opium and kindred drug habits are most emphatically denounced, and gaming is also forbidden. The use of tobacco is discouraged in no uncertain terms.

Admonitions forbidding mendicity, slavery, cruelty to animals, and various offences, together with rules regarding public hygiene, education of both sexes and other matters need not here be mentioned, as they are already provided by Western civilization, though in the Orient the need for these is very great.

The philosophy of Baha'o'llah is simplicity itself. Man can only know and become spirit-

ually quickened by the Infinite God *through His Manifestation*. He manifests Himself to mankind through "The Word," that uncreated power which has spoken to the world through the Prophets and Chosen Ones of the past, and which has again in these latter days spoken to the world through Baha'o'llah.

Heaven and hell are conditions of the soul. The soul which lives in God is in that divine state called heaven, while one not yet awakened to the glory of God is in a state of darkness, or hell. The coming of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth has been the one theme of Christ and the Prophets. All have spoken of this epoch in different terminology, but in reality they all spoke of the one great age of divine enlightenment—a time when faith should replace unbelief, and when divine knowledge should replace ignorance and superstition. This is to be the culmination of creation, for the world will be brought consciously under the guidance of God.

Eternal life is the state of soul of spiritually-quickened man. All souls exist as entities after the separation from the material body. However, from the spiritual standpoint, this mere existence is not "life." Only those souls who are awake to the glory of God can be said to be alive and of the life eternal. This spiritual awakening is from God. It is His gift and greatest bounty to man. Through the spirit man's soul is awakened from slumber and, though in the world, yet he lives in a higher realm from which he receives divine strength and force.

It is not through philosophy but through love and service to the world that the Bahais expect to reach mankind and lift it to a higher condition. In this day belief and faith unaccompanied by good deeds are not acceptable before God. The time has come for men to live the life of the Kingdom—to live it in the world—to be in the world but not of the world.

The mission of Abdul-Baha is to teach people how to make the connection between the divine and the human—how to live the life of the Kingdom in this world. His very presence is uplifting. He *understands*. All that is noble in one's being responds to his word, and by the light of his life of active service in the world all spiritual attainment is possible.

A spiritual wave has passed through the religious world awakening in men's souls the desire for divine knowledge, confirming them in their faith in an existence beyond this material world, and implanting within their hearts a fraternal bond which unites them as souls irrespective of race or creed.

In all countries and in all religious systems this awakening is observed. Thinking people see and understand these manifest signs which indicate the rapid approach of an epoch of general spiritual enlightenment among men.

The mission of the Bahai Movement is to spiritually quicken and unite all men. Its appearance was in the East, while its fruits are now being seen the world around. It appeals to all people through the universal language of love. It appeals to all peoples as the fulfilment of their own teachings, and clearly dem-

onstrates that there is from the spiritual viewpoint but one religion though there be many philosophies.

The universality of the Bahai teaching has already been proved by the multitude of elements which it has embraced and assimilated and which it has brought into union of belief, spirit and action. Its teachers do not attempt to convert people but rather to spread amongst those who desire to know the message that the Lord has come and has established His Kingdom on earth. As the soul is awakened by this glad tidings the spirit takes root therein, grows and brings forth the fruits of The Kingdom. The Bahai Movement is not another sect. It is that which is uniting all sects. Through this divine power, Christians, Jews, and Atheists in the West, and the same in the East, together with Mussulmans, Zoroastrians, Buddhists and Brahmans, are being united in thought, faith and love.

In the spiritual as well as the material world wherever there is demand there is also supply. The world of today is filled with religious teaching but it needs love to break down the cold barriers between men and to unite them as brothers. People are starving for divine love. This demand is clearly visible in all grades of society; it is universal. The Bahai Movement not only provides a philosophy of love but also the power to live the teaching and to show it forth by thought, word and deed. It supplies the universal need of man.

It is therefore the Universal Religion of the world and the basis of the great universal civilization which is to be.

CHARLES MASON REMEX.

Washington, D. C.,

October 19, 1908.

Information regarding the teachings, the work, and the publications of the Bahai Cause, together with copies of this pamphlet, singly or in quantities for distribution, will be furnished upon application to one of the following centers:

THE BAHAI ASSEMBLY OF CHICAGO,
P. O. Box 283. Chicago, Ill.

THE BAHAI ASSEMBLY OF NEW YORK,
226 West 58th St., New York City.

THE BAHAI ASSEMBLY OF WASHINGTON,
P. O. Box 192. Washington, D. C.

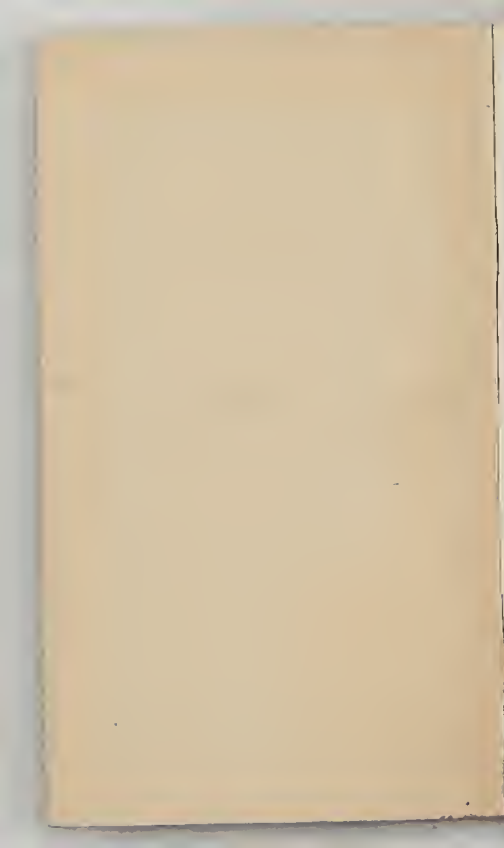


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WASHINGTON, D. C.

**OBSERVATIONS
OF A
BAHAI TRAVELLER**

1908





OBSERVATIONS
OF A
BAHAI TRAVELLER
1908

PREFACE

To those interested in the Bahai Movement.

Acting on the suggestion of Abdul-Baha, I have written the following account of travels made last summer among some Bahais of the Orient.

In the month of June and again in August of last year I visited the city of Acre, in Syria, and there saw and talked with the leader of the Bahai Movement, Abdul-Baha. Through these accompanying pages I hope to share with you some of that spirit which one receives from him, and through contact with his followers.

CHARLES MASON REMEY,
Washington, D. C.

19th June, 1909.

INTRODUCTION

Asia, the continent from which the Caucasian peoples swept westward to rule the world, has in like manner been the land from whence has come spiritual sustenance for mankind—his religion. In her mountains, the prophets communed with God and revealed His life-giving Word; and from her shores their followers embarked to carry the messages of Truth to the nations of the West.

Civilization is the outward expression of the inner or spiritual condition of a people. The civilization of the West is in reality the fruit of the religion, which it has received from the East. The Orient is the mother, who has sent forth a man child, which is the Occident. Now that mother has grown old. She has been plundered and pillaged by her offspring of the West, and is helpless. The time is at hand for the Occident to go to her help, and in the spirit of love serve her and lift her from her present condition. By so doing the West will gain abundantly—gain through giving as well as receiving, for the Orient has much to give to the West.

As with woman, the strength of the Orient manifests itself through those soul characteristics that are subjective rather than objective; while, on the other hand, as with man, the strength of the Occident manifests itself through those soul characteristics that are objective rather than subjective.

The man who seeks masculine virtue in woman is quite as sure to be disappointed as is the Occidental who visits the Orient with the expectation of there finding people fashioned after the standard of the West. The wise man seeks in woman those feminine virtues wherein she is strong and, by union with her, finds a balance which his masculine nature needs. In this manner is it necessary that the Occident and Orient should come together? Where the one is strong, the other is weak; and where the one is weak, the other is strong. Through this unity, the highest and most noble in each is forthcoming.

The western nations that have gone into the Orient have gone to conquer. They have succeeded in subjugating the people, but they have not won them. They have always remained strangers in a strange land. There has been no union between them and the Oriental peoples, and, consequently, but little lasting good has come to either from their meeting.

Woman may be subjugated by man, but, unless she is won by love, this subjugation narrows her character and life and tends to develop everything save her better and nobler nature. This is the condition of the Orient of today. While her people have a certain respect for the superior power of the West, nevertheless a great chasm separates the two—an abyss which can be bridged only through awakening in each a love for the other. As man's love-union with woman marks an epoch in the development of his character and opens before him a field of hitherto unknown possibilities,

so the uniting of the Occident with the Orient will be productive of the greatest good to the world.

This unity of all peoples, East and West, is the object and aim of The Bahai Teaching. This movement had its birth in the East and, like the other phases of the One Truth, which was revealed by all the prophets, it has worked its way westward until now its adherents encircle the earth. Under its invigorating spiritual power, its followers in the Orient are awakening to and seeking the advantages of western civilization and are helping conditions there by ministering physically, morally and spiritually to the people about them; while in the Occident, the same force is giving people calmness, assurance, and poise of soul, which the strenuousness of western life has all but destroyed.

Under the guidance of its three inspired leaders, The Bab, who was the forerunner and the First Point of this revelation, Baha'ollah, who was the revealer of The Word, and Abdui-Baha, who is the expounder of The Word, the Bahai Movement is breaking down the barriers between the various religious systems, and, through its vital divine power, is uniting all human elements in one great universal brotherhood that is destined to grow and expand until it fills the world. This is that which was foretold by the prophets and seers of the past. It is the establishment of God's Kingdom among men, and it is the nucleus from which will evolve the great universal civilization.

NARRATIVE

For some time prior to leaving America for the East, in April, 1908, I had been in correspondence with Mr. Sydney Sprague in the hope that we would be able to arrange to make together a trip into Turkestan and Persia. It was not, however, until our meeting in London early in the following month that our plan of travel was finally mapped out and decided upon.

Mr. Sprague had, for several years, been engaged in the Bahai work in London and was, at that moment, unable to leave England, so it was arranged that we should meet in Vienna about three weeks later, from whence we planned to travel eastward. Mr. Sprague's route to Vienna lay through Brussels and Stuttgart, while mine was via Paris, Stuttgart and Munich, which places are all Bahai centers.

I must not omit a paragraph regarding the Bahai work now being carried on in Stuttgart. Eight months previous to the visit of which I write I spent a few days there where then was but a handful of Bahais. This time, however, I found an organized Assembly, with many people busily engaged in serving The Cause by translating and publishing Bahai literature, as well as by organizing meetings for teaching and study and like work. One very enthusiastic believer was erecting a building in

which he was making provision for an assembly room, which, when completed, would be a home and a center for the Bahais. In many ways I saw the firmness with which these friends had grasped the teachings and were working out its principles. During the intervening eight months, Miss Alma Knobloch of Washington had been teaching in Stuttgart, and the fruits of her efforts and those of her friends were easily seen in the work of that assembly. When the organs of the body are all working, and performing each its own function, then the body is vigorous and strong. So it is with an assembly of friends in which each is doing his own part. As individuals they do not necessarily attract much attention, yet the power of the assembly as a whole is strongly felt.

On the eve of our planned departure from Vienna, a tablet (letter) was received from Abdul-Baha, which opened the way for me to visit Acre on my way out to the East. Although I had hoped to be able to make this visit, yet, on account of the governmental troubles then rife throughout Turkish domains, I had no anticipation of realizing my desire. Despite the abrupt change in our plans, everything arranged itself quite well. My going to Syria gave Mr. Sprague a much desired opportunity to visit a brother Bahai in Constantinople. Traveling leisurely by steamer down the Danube and through the Black Sea he reached Constantinople and completed a visit there of

three weeks by the time I joined him. In the mean time my route took me the length of Italy, through Greece and down into Egypt before I reached Syria.

I must pause a moment to write of some friends whom I met in Florence, friends who are spiritual seekers and who received me with open arms, although I had only known them through correspondence. Sr. Arturo Reghini, one of the founders, and the leading spirit of the Biblioteca Filosofica, 5 Piazzale Donatello, Florence, had, during the past year, delivered a course of lectures upon the Bahai Movement. These were attended by thinking people who are awake to the present day spiritual conditions and necessities, and to many of these the Bahai Movement appealed strongly. That which was most noticeable and attractive in this philosophical center was the kindly spirit which the people bore towards all religious movements, and this was truly Bahai in character.

After brief meetings with the Bahais in Alexandria and Port Said, I took steamer from the latter port to Haifa, where I landed after a voyage of twenty-four hours. Many Bahai pilgrims to the Holy Land have described Haifa and Mount Carmel, yet each takes away with him impressions impossible to put into words. This mountain, in which lived the prophet Elijah, and from Old Testament days considered the Lord's own ground, has, during the

past half century, again been the center of spiritual activities, the glad tidings of which are now being beralded the world around.

The foreshadowing of this latter-day movement we see in the expectant veneration with which this spot is held by Christians, Jews, and Moslems. All three reverence its holy places, for in the sacred writings of each are many prophecies regarding the triumphal coming of the Messiah, and of the transformation of this land and her people from sterility and poverty to fertility and power. Here are several religious communities, monasteries and convents, as well as the German Temple Colony situated on the lower slope of the mountain. This latter was founded in the sixties under a religious enthusiasm which had its birth in Wurttemberg.

Off to the north of Mount Carmel, across the Bay of Haifa, is the town of Acre. Built on a rock, surrounded on three sides by the sea, the fourth by a moat and the land, she appears to float on the water. From without, her white fortifications, domes, and turrets, beneath a brilliant sun, with their high lights and black shadows, are strikingly symbolic of the spiritual conditions of light and darkness which have existed within those prison walls. Here, for years, under conditions almost too dreadful to be described, was confined the world's greatest teacher, Baha'o'llah. He, with about seventy followers, storm-tossed exiles, after years of persecution for His faith, was finally brought in captivity to the dungeon of Acre,

within whose darkened recesses languished many a political prisoner, thief and murderer.

It is amid the particles of matter, torn by the forces of the elements from the mountain side and carried down into the valley, that seeds find root, grow and bring forth their fruits. In like manner do we see, in the spiritual history of the world, that, amid the ruin brought about by man, spirituality has had its growth and fruition—out of the blackest darkness has come the most brilliant light. This is strikingly brought to one while in Acre. That Acre, the scene of the bloodiest combats of the Crusades, and, in more modern times, of the Napoleonic war in Syria, many times leveled to the ground, and, finally, a penal colony, under the late despotic government of Turkey—that this should be the place from which should go forth to the world the great Spiritual Message of Peace, uniting men of all nations and races in brotherly love—is, indeed, in accordance with the marvelous workings of God, as we view them in the past and present.

During the winter, previous to the visit of which I write, it was generally known amongst the Bahais that Abdul-Baha and the friends in Acre were in trouble, while but few, if any, of us in the West realized how serious was the condition there. The cause of this was the general corruption of the old regime of Turkish government, that reached its climax just before the declaration of a constitutional form of government in Constantinople, in the summer of 1908. The Bahais in and about Acre were exiles in a foreign land, and, being with-

out temporal power of protection, were considered as legitimate plunder by certain officials then in power. Abdul-Baha told me that he had received threatening messages from a very high official, temporally over him, to which he had replied, saying that he was Abdul-Baha (the servant of God), that were that official to exalt him, he would still be Abdul-Baha, were he to oppress him he would still be Abdul-Baha, and, were he to kill him, yet would his station ever be the same, Abdul-Baha.

During the five days I waited in Haifa, before it was possible to proceed to Acre, the troublous condition was to some extent ameliorated by the liberating from the prison of Acre of four recent converts to the faith, who had, for several months, been confined there because of their allegiance to The Cause. About this time a special guard, placed before the house of Abdul-Baha to watch its inmates, was, by order of the governor, removed, so matters began to take on a less troubled aspect.

Notwithstanding these changes for the better, I had to be very careful in entering and leaving the city of Acre. Abdul-Baha's house being watched by spies, I did not go there, but spent the two days and two nights of my visit within the confines of the house of Aga Seyed Taghi Afnan, the venerable Bahai under whose direction the arrangements for the building of the Mashrak-Ei-Azcar in Eshkhabad were made and executed. Here our teacher, Abdul-Baha, came to see me twice each day. Despite the agitated conditions—for his followers had been almost panic-stricken—

Abdul-Baha was calm and evidently very happy. The strain of many years of trouble had left its imprint upon the physical man, but his soul, which is so emancipated, was brimming over with the love and joy of the Lord.

I could not help comparing this visit to Abdul-Baha with my first visit with him, together with several believers late in the winter of 1901, at which time he was comparatively free from worldly troubles, being allowed to reside temporarily in Haifa. Our party of nine American and European pilgrims was in his house. Then the approach of a Bahai was an easy matter: we went about the town mingling freely with people, and meeting them socially as one would have done in any place. But as I recall those days I remember that our leader often looked distressed. Then The Cause in the West was not united and as strong as it is now. While many were attracted and the movement was growing, yet the believers were in danger. They were as young trees enveloped by the blast of the winter's gale. This Abdul-Baha knew and realized, while we did not, and, notwithstanding his own ease, it weighed upon him. Now all was reversed. He was in trouble, but those over whom he had so diligently watched and prayed had, through his labor and sacrifices, grown strong in spirit and were uniting in serving humanity as he by his example had taught them to do. Now the unity and the steadfastness of the Bahais being accomplished, his own present troubles were as naught.

Abdul-Baha spoke at some length regarding

the uniting of the people of the West with those of the East—their spiritual unity—which is bringing about the regeneration of mankind. Now we have in the world of man all the elements for the progress of the people save the one necessary element—the element of love by which all must be brought together and assimilated into one. The heart of the world is tired and sick because it needs the balm of the love of God. This is what Baha'o'llah brought into the world—the power of uniting all in one—and this is what Abdul-Baha, by his life and teaching, is exemplifying and literally infusing into souls.

Abdul-Baha is anxious that in every possible way the believers in the East and West should unite; that communication should increase and that an interchange of ideas should ensue in order that all may profit thereby and be helped. Practically the only instruction which he gave me regarding my trip to Persia and Turkestan was that I should mingle freely with the Bahais and meet them on their own ground and in their own manner with a brother's embrace.

All who know Abdul-Baha love him devotedly, whether or not they be acquainted with the tenets of his teaching, for, on account of the oppression of the Bahais in the Holy Land, until the present time practically no teaching has been done there. One instance of this came to my immediate notice in the following way. Finding upon my return to Haifa from Acre that I had two days to wait for a steamer to take me on my journey, Dr. Fareed

(the son of Mirza Assad'o'llah, a Bahai teacher well known in America), who had been my constant companion and interpreter while in those parts, set out with me on an excursion to Nazareth. A drive of several hours across the plains of Sharon and Ben Ahmed brought us to the foothills of the Lebanon Mountains, high up in the valley of which is nestled the little town of Nazareth, the older parts of which have probably changed but little since the days of the Savior, Jesus.

During the drive, Dr. Fareed related several incidents of Bahai interest in connection with the places we were passing. He spoke in particular of one Sheikh Youseff, a man of wealth in lands and cattle, now deceased, who lived in those parts, and who, during the days when Baha'o'llah was there an exile, befriended and served Him in many ways. On arriving in Nazareth, we betook ourselves to call on the governor of the town, who was a son-in-law of the late sheikh. A very steep, narrow and dirty street, flanked by high walls, brought us to the door of the governor's house, which, from without, was unattractive enough. Upon entering, however, we found ourselves in a large court through which we were conducted to the principal reception room of the house, spacious, and beautifully furnished, the windows of which looked out over the receding terraced roofs of the neighboring houses, down the valley and on to the plain below. We were most graciously received by the governor. He and his wife spoke many times of their deep esteem and love for Abdul-Baha, and, though

they knew but little about America, and even less about the Bahai Teaching, yet they were not at all surprised that Abdul-Baha should have so many friends in the far West, nor that these friends should travel over land and sea to spend oftentimes but a few hours with him. A servant was placed at our disposal to conduct us about the town to visit the many places of religious interest. Afterwards we visited the mausoleum of the late Sheikh Youseff, a beautiful marble structure, beneath the dome of which rested the sarcophagus of white marble overlaid with gold. Later, when we arrived at our hotel, we found a basket of fruit from the governor, and in the evening he came to return our call, and again, the next morning before our departure, sent one of his men in case we might need some service. These kindnesses to us, because we were friends of Abdul-Baha, spoke strongly of the esteem in which he is held by those outside of his following.

The home of the Afnan* in Acre, where I was entertained, was a house in which Baha'o'llah had lived for some years. Like many Syrian houses, the lower story, with its walls, several feet in thickness, and high, massive, vaulted ceilings, was used for mercantile purposes, while the upper floor, reached from the street by a heavily barred door, court and steep

* Afnan is the name applied to the relatives of The Bab.

stone staircase, was the dwelling. This house has been purchased by an American Bahai (a lady who has spent much time in Acre), that, on account of its associations, it may always remain in Bahai hands. One room, surrounded by loggias overlooking the sea, was that which had been occupied by Baha'o'llah, while a smaller one next to it, formerly occupied by Abdul-Baha, was the one in which I was lodged. This room, measuring, perhaps, twelve by sixteen feet, with the exception of the beamed ceiling—the woodwork of which was painted in various colors—was devoid of ornamentation. The walls were washed with lime into which had been inserted sufficient blueing to take away the disagreeable glare of a large white wall surface. Its furnishing consisted of a straw matting on the floor, with a divan along one side of the room which was covered with a rug; a small tea table about eighteen inches square, standing, perhaps, one foot above the floor, completed the necessary fitting of an oriental apartment. In the center of the house was a general reception and dining room containing a table and chairs. When more people came into my room than could be accommodated upon the divan, chairs were brought and then taken out, when needed elsewhere. Simplicity characterizes every phase of Oriental life, and, if one enters into that life and adapts himself to the customs, he will not find himself uncomfortable for surely many of its customs are more adapted to the conditions there than would be transplanted Westernisms.

As bedtime approached, I began mentally to make my arrangements for the night, expecting

to sleep upon the divan. However, as I was about to put this into effect, some of the friends appeared at the door with bundles of bedding which they proceeded to arrange in the following manner: A pashe-band (literally mosquito box) was hung in the center of the chamber and sustained in place by cords to the four corners of the room. This contrivance is about six feet long by five in width and height. It is made of loosely woven cloth which admits the passage of air. In one end is an opening encircled by a draw-string; through this aperture the mattress and bedding are first inserted; then the sleeper crawls in, drawing the string after him. Inconvenient as this may seem, it is most comfortable and is absolute proof against vermin, including some of the larger and more dangerous species, such as scorpions and spiders, with which those Eastern countries abound, the stings of which are always serious and oftentimes fatal.

When the morning and the hour came for me to leave Acre, I was quite unconscious of it, being still lost in the realms of sleep. The previous day had been as strenuous an one as Oriental conditions could have afforded; from five o'clock in the morning until eleven o'clock at night, almost without a break, I was conversing with various Believers, who had come to see me, so that when bed time came I was tired out. Abdul-Baha came to say good-bye to me about half-past seven in the morning, but, finding me still sleeping, would not allow me to be awakened, but stood guard at the door, walking up and down the narrow cor-

ridor. A half hour passed thus, when he was called out on the loggia, which gave Dr. Fareed the watched-for opportunity to enter the room and give me a necessarily vigorous poking through the pashe-band, which aroused me. A half hour later I had received Abdul-Baha's fatherly embrace and parting blessing, and, together with Dr. Fareed, was being driven through the canon-like streets of Acre on the way to Haifa.

Embarking from Haifa in the evening, I landed the following morning shortly after sunrise in Beirut, the chief seaport of Syria, where I found a very hearty welcome at the hands of Bahai friends. The kindness of one of these brothers was quite touching. He was a Jewish Bahai, originally from Hamadan, Persia, where there is a very large Israelitish following. He told me that sixteen years before he had wanted to go to America to teach The Cause, but on account of not knowing the language, and for want of means, he had not been able to carry out his desire; nevertheless he had been constant in his prayers for the field of work in the West. Later on other teachers went to America and accomplished the work he had longed to do. How much work he had really done for America through prayer and earnest desire I could only judge from the love he had for the Bahais in the far West, of which I seemed to be the undeserving recipient. The significance of such a meeting is not understood at the time, but, after parting with such a friend, a touch of the spirit of brotherhood remains with one and

then one realizes the virtue of coming into contact with virtue.

Beirut is an important educational center and a number of Bahai young men are there as students. That night a meeting was held, attended mostly by these young believers, after which several of us supped together and repaired to the home of a Persian Bahai, formerly of Baghdad, where the night was spent. The city proper is built on a promontory projecting into the sea behind which rise abruptly the verdure-clad Lebanon Mountains, whose summits are usually lost to view in the clouds. Our friend's house stood on a high point of land and from its terraced roof we had a superb view of the moonlit sea, the glittering shore of which stretched off to the south past the ancient towns of Tyre and Sidon and on toward the prison city of Acre, while, behind us, towered Lebanon, the twinkling lights of its many villas and villages giving a unique beauty to the scene.

Those who visit the Orient are always impressed by the brilliancy of its nights. Even the starlight there seems as brilliant as does the moonlight in more northern climes. To use an Oriental expression, I will always have with me the fragrance of the nights spent on that roof-top during various visits to Beirut. Our host is now an old man. Since the days of the First Point (The Bab) he has been an ardent and faithful believer and has spent his life in serving The Cause. Now his three sons are continuing his work and it is they who receive and serve the friends from the

East and West as they pass through Beirut.

There is a poetry in Oriental hospitality, of which western seems devoid. Everything is so spontaneous and simple. Conversation with them is an art. Their narratives ramble along, always aiming, though indirectly, at a fixed point which is at first obscure, but which in the end they bring out with the accumulated force of many pictures and much action. Often the movement is not sufficiently accelerated to please our western craving for direct results—to see the end at the beginning—but nevertheless through it all runs a certain poetic strain, which is the spirit they wish to impart. This leaves the listener with a peculiar sense of being an actual part of that which is being related and he carries away with him a soul impression as well as the narrative. Imagine being on the roof-top of the house of our friend, the merchant of Baghdad, seated about a boiling samovar, sipping tea from small glass cups, while one of the sons relates events which transpired in the early days of The Cause—those days, when even to be suspected of being a Believer was sufficient to have one's possessions confiscated and possibly one's life forfeited. Under this terrible tyranny many of our people migrated from their homes to foreign parts, thus spreading The Message far and wide. Such was the case of this family of Baghdad, who, after many troubles brought upon them by enemies of The Faith, are now serving in a foreign land under more pacific conditions than before. It was in this house in Beirut that the vener-

able teacher, Mirza Assad'o'llah, the friend of the American Bahais, sought refuge when he and his son, Dr. Fareed, with several other believers, came overland from Persia in the winter with their precious burden, the blessed remains of The First Point, The Bab.

As is well known, after the martyrdom of The Bab in Tabriz, his body was cast out into the moat which surrounded the city. Then it was that there arose a friend who went and recovered the remains, taking it to a place of safety and swathing it in tissues of silk. Afterwards it was secreted in one place for a time and then in other places known only to the faithful, and so many years passed. A few years ago, arrangements having been made for the entombment of The Bab's remains on Mount Carmel, Mirza Assad'o'llah set out for Persia, and, returning after a most eventful journey by camel across the desert with his holy burden, which was disguised as a bale of merchandise, he reached the sea at Beirut, from whence the remainder of the journey to Carmel was made by water.

Though the steamer which I took from Beirut to Constantinople was not booked to sail until midday, yet in accordance with the Oriental custom of arriving on board a steamer hours ahead of time, I embarked in the early morning, several of the friends going in the bark to the steamer with me. Each of these arrived at the quay with a parting gift in his hand—a steamer chair, fruit, sweets, etc., a package of Persian insect powder—to

the Western mind a curious gift, but an article which adds much to the personal comfort of the traveler in those parts—and, finally, after the party had left the ship, some one (I never knew whom) sent me by a boatman a large jar of excellent potable water which was far superior to that afforded by the ship. I mention these details to show the extreme kindness of these friends—kindness to one whom many of them had not seen before nor probably would ever see again. This is indeed the spirit I have found manifest among the Bahais everywhere.

The passage from Beirut to Constantinople was uneventful, Smyrna, where the ship stopped for a few hours, being the only intermediate port. The Bahais in Syria had advised me not to land my luggage in Constantinople, but to continue passage by the same steamer to Odessa and from there on to Baku by rail. This was the route often taken by returning Bahai pilgrims, who dislike having anything more to do with the Turkish officials than is absolutely necessary.

Going ashore at Constantinople early in the morning I made my way to the abode of the American Bahai with whom Mr. Sprague was staying. A hearty welcome, followed by a hasty meal, preceded our embarking, for our ship remained in port only a few hours. Until quite recently the Oriental and Occidental Bahais in Constantinople have been obliged to avoid meeting together on account of making trouble with the government, so during his

visit there Mr. Sprague had not been able to meet any of the Eastern friends.

A cold and stormy passage of forty-eight hours across the Black Sea brought us to the port and city of Odessa. Here we took rail for Baku, a long ride, but not one devoid of interest. At first the line lay over rolling fields of grain-country, which reminded us much of our own western prairies—then, as the route turned off toward the south and we neared the Caucasus, we had splendid views of its rugged and picturesque mountain ranges towering one above the other in the distance. Again changing direction, the line bore off eastward and descended into the Caspian basin, where the railroad turns to the south, following down the western coast to the sea, with an expanse of water stretching off to the right, the Caucasian Mountains rising abruptly on the left.

In Baku we had little difficulty in finding some of our Bahai friends. Fortunately for us, they were well known and easy to locate, for we did not speak a word of the language of the country. Here and in some other places in Southern Russia, as well as in Russian Turkestan, the Bahai movement and its followers are recognized and protected by the government. In fact, here we found that to be known as Bahais facilitated travel, for our people are known to be for peace and tranquillity and are in no way associated with the many revolutionary movements which keep that country most of the time in a state of turbulence.

In Baku we were lodged in the house of a Bahai, Ashraff Karimoff, who lived only a few doors from the building now temporarily used as the Mashrak-el-Azcar.* Quite a large lot of land in the heart of the city has been acquired for the building of a Mashrak-el-Azcar. A building now standing in one corner of this enclosure, besides serving as a place of meeting for the Bahais, affords lodging when traveling Bahais and their friends are entertained. Here also resides a Bahai teacher, who, with several other followers, serves The Cause, thus forming an establishment which is the center of Bahai activities in that city.

During our stay in Baku, we were entertained several times by a Bahai, A. Mussa Nagieff, a man who has extensive oil interests in that section. On the day following our arrival we went with him to inspect his oil wells at Bala Khaneh, not far from Baku. After spending some time among the wells we were taken to a house where a Bahai meeting had been arranged. This meeting was composed chiefly of laboring men from the adjacent wells.

In the West many people are impressed by the fact that the Bahai teaching appeals alike to people of culture on the one hand as well as to those upon the other who have not had the advantages of education, together with its responsibilities. This was even more striking in this meeting than any which I ever attended

*Mashrak-el-Azcar means, literally, "The place for mentioning God."

in the West. Several western travelers have written of the industries of Bala Khaneh and have described the way in which the oil is brought to the surface by the workmen, whose scanty clothing is saturated with unrefined petroleum. From this standpoint their condition is not enviable and needs to be improved, but we are permitted to see another aspect of their life which might astonish people in the West who to-day are striving to conciliate capital and labor. To see the capitalist and laborer side by side on equal terms in spirit in such a meeting as we had shows the work of the Bahai Cause. Though in outward affairs there was a distinction between employer and employee, there was at the same time beneath that a fraternal relation which made their interests as one.

On another occasion we had an interesting meeting with a number of Circassian peasants who came into the city from the country to greet us. The Circassian is a combination of several peoples, which gives him, together with the child-like simplicity and gentleness of the Oriental, a certain almost savage force which is characteristic of the north. It is ever interesting to witness the assimilation of these elements from the north, south, east and west by the Bahai faith, for wherever it is planted it finds root and grows.

From Baku our course of travel lay eastward over the Caspian into Turkestan. The afternoon of the evening that we left Baku a largely attended feast was spread in the Mashrak-ei-Azcar. Tablets were chanted and

Mr. Sprague made an address in Persian which was translated into the language of the country for the benefit of those present. The meeting was brought somewhat abruptly to a close when one of the friends hurriedly entered to inform us that we had no time to lose in making our steamer. In almost less time than it takes to recount it the crowd had poured out into the street, where several carriages awaited us, and amid good-byes, we, with as many as the several vehicles would accommodate, were driven off rapidly toward the port.

On the quay and aboard the steamer we were met by others, the party growing as it was reinforced by groups of friends from the meeting, who arrived at intervals. Little did we think, as we stood on the stern of the moving steamer, waving adieu to the crowd on the pier, that there would be any annoying results from this farewell demonstration.

Turkestan, which is north of Persia, west of China, south of Russia and Siberia, and east of the Caspian Sea, has comparatively recently been opened to railroad travel by the Trans-Caspian line. The western extremity of this railroad is the town of Krasnovodsk, on the eastern coast of the Caspian. From here the line goes east to Eshkhabad, Merve, Samarkhand and Tashkhand; then northward to Orenberg, from whence a line joins it with the Trans-Siberian railroad.

On account of the proximity of Turkestan to India the Russians guard that country jealously. It is only by special permission that any foreigner is allowed to penetrate beyond

the frontier. Before leaving America I tried to inform myself of these matters through the Russian embassy in Washington, from which I was able to obtain no information at all. While in Europe I applied to the American ambassador in St. Petersburg, asking him to procure for Mr. Sprague and me the necessary permission to travel as tourists in Turkestan. In reply to this I was notified by letter and by wire that the necessary permission had been granted and that while no document was sent us, the officials along the Trans-Caspian route had been advised of our coming.

On the steamer from Baku we met two brother Bahais with their families, who were traveling our way, so we consolidated into one party. On arriving at Krasnovodsk the following morning we landed, and, finding that our train did not leave until late in the afternoon, we made ourselves comfortable under the shade of some trees in a garden adjoining the station. Seated here we had lunch and later on tea. We were about to gather together our luggage for boarding the train when we were approached by a police officer accompanied by two men who demanded to see our papers. This, of course, was no more than travelers in those countries expect at any time, so we were troubled only when told that there was no permission for us to travel in those parts and that we would be detained there until such had been received.

It was with some degree of consternation that we watched the train pulling out with our Persian friends aboard, and then we turned

to survey the town about us. It was about as barren a place as the imagination could have conceived of. Hemmed in by the sea against mountains as barren as only the salt wastes of the Caspian basin can be, the only verdure being a few trees and shrubs which had to be watered with condensed sea water—there was no fresh water within miles—Krasnovodsk was indeed uninviting for an indefinite sojourn such as ours bid fair to be.

The officer who seemed to have jurisdiction over us was politeness itself. Even under the most exasperating circumstances he was all smiles and would bow most gallantly with his right hand placed over his heart. We were lodged in a hotel where he lived, and, though a sharp eye was kept upon us, we were at liberty to wander about the town as we chose.

As soon as possible we wired to our ambassador in St. Petersburg and also to the military governor of Tashkhend, under whose governorship is the government of Western Turk-estan, asking them to take steps for us to be allowed to continue our journey.

On the third day of our stay, when we were beginning to weary of the monotony of waiting, the door of our room opened and in walked three Bahais from Eshkhabad—Mirza Taghi Khan, Mirza Housein Oskoui and Mirza Fazl'o'llah Khan. Before then we had been in telegraphic communication with the friends in Eshkhabad, and knowing of our plight these three friends had come down a run of eighteen hours to Krasnovodsk to share with us the period of waiting. They told us that the

Bahais in Eshkhabad had been advised of our expected arrival in their city by dispatch from Baku, and about fifty of them came a four-hours' journey down the line to meet us. There in a small station house they spent the day and night expecting us by every train.

The remainder of our time in Krasnovodsk passed comparatively quickly. On the fifth day in the afternoon a dispatch came from the military governor of the province granting the waited-for permission. It was with much hilarity that we hastily gathered our belongings together and, within the hour, were boarding the train for Eshkhabad.

Only after the affair was over did we ascertain the real cause of our detention. It seems that the police in Baku witnessed our departure from that city, and imagining from the parting demonstration that we might be political agitators, telegraphed ahead to Krasnovodsk, and, though we had the necessary permission to travel in Transcaspia, it was cancelled by this dispatch. Unpleasant as this affair seemed at the time it was indeed a very good thing in the end, for the people of Krasnovodsk were impressed by the fact that two Bahais were there from America and in this way our three Oriental friends who spoke the language of the country were able to do quite a little teaching.

The route to Eshkhabad was over the desert. For the most part of the way we were in sight of the Elburz mountains on the south, which here form the northern boundary of Persia. On the following morning, drawing nearer to

this range, we began to distinguish, by the streaks of verdure on the mountain sides, rivulets coming down to be absorbed by the thirsty sands of the plain. Every few miles could be seen the remains of ruined cities. In a recent tablet revealed to the Bahais of the East and of the West Abdul-Baha mentions this country in the following terms:

"For man has two aspects—one the sublimity of nature and intellectual qualities, and the other the base animality and imperfections of passion.

"If you travel through the continents and countries of the world you will see on one side the signs of ruin and destruction, and on the other the signs and monuments of civilization and construction. As to the ruin and destruction, they are the signs of contention and discord, of war and battle. But order and construction are the results of the virtues of friendliness and concord.

"If one travel in the central desert of Asia he will observe how many great and populous cities have been ruined. From the Caspian Sea to the River Oxus naught is to be seen save forlorn and deserted prairies and deserts. The Russian Railway (the Trans-Caspian R. R.) takes two days and two nights to traverse the ruined cities and destroyed villages of that desert. There was a time when that land was very populous and in the highest state of civilization and development; science and knowledge were widespread, the arts and

professions established, commerce and agriculture were in the utmost state of perfection, and civil government and politics well organized. Now, all this great region is the habitation of desolation and shelters only the nomadic Turkoman tribes and the wandering beasts of prey. The cities of that land, as Ghorgan, Tassa, Abiavard, and Shahrastan, were once famous in the world for sciences, knowledge, professions, wonders, wealth, greatness, happiness and virtue. Now no voice or murmur is to be heard in all that land save the roar of ferocious brutes, and naught is to be seen save the wandering wolves.

"This ruin and destruction was occasioned by the battles and wars between Iran (Persia) and Turkan, which had become different in customs and religion. Their godless leaders made public property of the blood, belongings, and the privacy of each other. This is the exposition of one instance.

"Then, when ye travel through the world and observe it, ye shall find all constructiveness and progressiveness to be signs of friendliness and love, and all destructiveness and ruin the results of hatred and enmity."

Before leaving Krasnovodsk our companions had telegraphed ahead to Eshkhabad and various intermediate points to announce our coming, so at a very early hour the next morning we began to be greeted by groups of Bahais

gathered at the stations along the line. The people aboard the train eyed us with no little interest, for it was uncommon to say the least to see foreigners so received. At two hours or more from Eshkhabad we were met by a delegation of believers from that city, who brought to us the greeting of their assembly.

The climax was reached when the train finally pulled into the station at Eshkhabad, where three hundred and more of the friends awaited us. As we stood on the platform of the car looking down into a sea of upturned faces, with many hands stretched out towards us, a wave of something came over me which was difficult to stand up against; but then was no time to break down, so with an effort I collected myself and stepped down into the crowd. Before I could realize it, I found myself hurried through the station with several hands upon each of my arms. Outside many carriages were in waiting, and without the loss of a moment we were being driven at a seemingly dangerous rate of speed toward the Mashrak-el-Azcar.

The Mashrak-el-Azcar of Eshkhabad — the largest structure of its kind so far erected — stands in about the center of the city, with its roof and dome rising high above the surrounding houses and trees. It is visible for miles over the plain as the traveler approaches the city, and seems only more imposing than from afar when one finds himself within its enclosure. Here, in the lower loggia which surrounds the building, we were greeted individually by several hundred Bahais. After tea and cooling drinks had been served and

greetings exchanged, everything quieted down while prayers were chanted. During this service all present sat in a respectful attitude, while one of the friends, the possessor of a rich and melodious voice, lifted it in chants of praise and thanksgiving. We were indeed thankful to have attained the blessing of this meeting.

The chanting over, the meeting broke up and we were then taken around the temple on a tour of inspection. Going up into the building almost to the top of the dome, we had a fine view of the town, with its many gardens and surrounding country. The town was as a green oasis in the desert, water from the neighboring mountains being brought to the city and conducted through water-ways to the various parks and gardens and along the gutters, in order that even the trees which flank the streets might be watered.

In the days of Baha'o'llah, He advised certain Bahais to migrate to and settle in *Eshkhabad. At that time the place was little more than a huddle of mud huts. However, little by little, broad boulevards were laid off and substantial houses were erected in place of the former inferior ones, until now it is a modern and prosperous city.

The Mashrak-el-Azcar stands in the center of a garden bounded by four streets. In the four corners of this enclosure are four buildings. One is the Bahai School. One is the Mosafer-Khaneh, or travelers' house, where pilgrims and travelers are lodged. One is for

*Eshkhabad means "City of Love."

the keepers, while the fourth one is to be used as a hospital. Nine radial avenues approach the temple from the several parts of the grounds, one of which, the principal approach to the building, leads from the main gateway of the grounds to the principal portal of the temple.

The temple is built on the plan of a regular polygon of nine sides. One side is occupied by the main entrance, flanked by two slender turrets. This, the principal doorway, opens toward the direction of the Holy Land. The entire building is surrounded by two series—one upper and one lower—of loggias which open out upon the garden.

The principal feature of the interior is the rotunda beneath the dome, which latter is the dominant feature of the exterior. The rotunda is surrounded by an aisle or ambulatory. Doors give egress from the ambulatory to the lower loggia without.

The interior walls of the rotunda are treated in five distinct stories. First, a series of nine arches and piers which separate the rotunda from the ambulatory. Second, a similar treatment with balustrades which separate the triforium gallery (which is above the ambulatory and is reached by two staircases in the loggias, placed one on either side of the main entrance) from the well of the rotunda. Third, a series of nine blank arches filled with fretwork, between which are escutcheons bearing The Greatest Name.* Fourth, a series of nine large

*Allaho'Abha (God is the Most Glorious).

arched windows. Fifth, a series of 18 bull's-eye windows. Above and resting on a cornice surmounting this last story rises the inner hemispherical shell of the dome.

The interior is elaborately decorated in plaster relief work. I am under the impression that eventually it is the intention to treat the interior in colors and gold, but at present it is in the simple white stucco. The exterior is also being done in stucco, which in that climate resists quite well the action of the elements. The style of the temple is Oriental, such as is common in Persia, while the exterior treatment of certain parts reminds one of the famous Taj-Mahal in India. The walls, which are of brick, are massively built, while the floors and dome are of concrete and iron. The whole structure impresses one by its mass and strength.

Imposing as is the Mashrak-el-Azcar as a building, the symbol for which it stands, the Spiritual Unity of the Bahais of the Orient, is that which impresses the believer more than all else. It represents the voluntary heartfelt offerings of a multitude of souls, the blending of the spirit of which is a power distinctively felt, and the temple building is as an ensign which testifies of this unity.

That which is manifested or expressed is more virile and forceful than that which is unmanifested or unexpressed. The rearing of this temple in the East has been a great source of strength to the people there, for through thus expressing their unity the Bahais have become stronger and more united than ever before. Now in America the Bahais are arising to build

a Mashrak-el-Azcar. Who can estimate the effect which will be produced by this building? It will be the cause of great strength and unity among the believers of the Occident and, being *The House of Unity* open to all peoples, it will be as a haven of rest to many a soul and as a beacon to guide those who seek. This all and more, too, it will be for us of the West. Now for those faithful souls of the Orient—those through whose suffering and sacrifice we in the West have received the spiritual light of this latter-day revelation—those through whose labors the way has been made easy for us of the Occident—a Mashrak-el-Azcar in America will be as the confirmation of their hopes and prayers for the West.

The erection of a temple in the West will strengthen the Holy Cause in the East more than anything which could happen in this country. Has not Abdul-Baha said that one of all things now to be accomplished in the West the building of the temple is the most important? Throughout the Bahai world the eyes of all are expectingly turned toward this country. Now we must show them a sign of spiritual unity and this must be the Mashrak-el-Azcar.

The Bahais of Eshkhabad form a strong element in the life of the place, and they are highly thought of and protected by the government. One of the friends told us of the way in which—about eighteen or twenty years ago—the Bahai Cause was first brought to the public notice in Eshkhabad by a martyrdom. It was the case of a learned man of some prominence,

who met his death after receiving many wounds at the hands of two assassins. These two individuals had been hired to do the deed by five Moslems, who took this measure to try to stop the spread of The Cause in that city. The Russian authorities took the matter in hand and condemned to death all seven men. The Bahais then petitioned the governor to spare their lives. He not having authority to do this, a petition to the same effect was sent to the czar, who granted it, and thus the prisoners were sent in chains to the mines of Siberia and now not one of the seven remains. Here is but another instance of the growth of The Cause through persecution, for from that time on the government not only allowed the Bahais to worship as they chose, but it protected them and showed them special favors.

During our stay in Eshkhabad we were entertained in the home of a Bahai by the name of Abbasoff. The house with its terrace, porches and garden was a large one, but none too large for the number of friends who thronged it. Sometimes we sat at table with as many as forty persons, while I do not recall dining with less than fifteen at table. Between meals the samovar was constantly kept boiling and a running service of tea, ices and cooling drinks was for the refreshment of the many callers.

Three days after our arrival in Eshkhabad we went up into the mountains for a few days to a resort called Feerouzay, where some of our friends had summer homes. Several of the Bahais accompanied us thither, and while there

we were joined by about thirty others who had gone up from the city for the occasion.

Every arrangement was made for our personal comfort during the drive of several hours to Feerouzay. We halted several times beside streams to rest the horses as well as to refresh ourselves by washing our faces and hands. In those Oriental countries there is much dust, so the traveler welcomes running water. In one of the carriages was a supply of ice and soda waters—nothing had been forgotten. At first the route lay over a track on the sandy plain as far as the mountains, then it wound up a narrow gorge until a fertile valley high up in the mountains was reached, at the upper end of which was the town of Feerouzay.

In the Bazaar quarter of the town we were greeted by a number who had congregated there to welcome us. They were arranged in a double line on either side of the roadway as we drove past. Shortly after our arrival in the home of Mirza Mohammad Afnan, a son of the aged Afnan of Acre, where we were to be entertained, quite a party gathered for dinner, the festivity continuing late into the night.

During the drive up to Feerouzay, Mr. Sprague fell into conversation with the driver of the carriage in which he rode, and the man became much interested in the teaching. On the following day, at an early hour, he came with his family to the house to see Mr. Sprague and to hear more about The Message. Our coming had been noised about, so we met many others, also, who were desirous of knowing about the Bahai Teaching.

From where we were, near the frontier, we could see the mountains of Persia. It seemed strange that, upon one side of an imaginary line, our people were protected and safe, while, upon the other side, opposite conditions reigned. The Bahais are safe in Turkestan, so from time to time Bahai refugees have sought protection there from the persecutions in Persia. Sheikh Ali Akbar, one of the friends who formerly had been a Mullah (priest of Islam), told us of some of the troubles which he had encountered through preaching and teaching among his own people, until finally he had been obliged to leave his home. This man interested us greatly—a man of commanding presence, whose finely cut features and poise of bearing bespoke the high caste Moslem with his pride and learning, and then, added to this, was the gentle influence of love which had come into his life with his acceptance of the Bahai Faith and his trouble and sacrifices therein. A whole history was written in the lines of his face.

Another type was Sheikh Mohammed Ali, upon whom devolves the chanting of the prayers and holy words in the Mashrak-el-Azcar, who has been given this service to perform on account of his vocal qualifications and devotion to The Cause. From his brilliant face, smiles and good cheer, one could hardly believe that his back and shoulders were a mass of scars from wounds inflicted as torture for The Faith at the hands of fanatical Moslems.

Everywhere we found joy upon the faces of those who had suffered the most. Only once

do I recall encountering grief. It was upon meeting with a believer, a very old and infirm man, who wept when he greeted us, we were told that several members of his family had been martyred during the comparatively recent massacres of Bahais in Yazd.

While in Feerouzay there was a constant round of meetings and gatherings. I will make special mention of one—a Bahai christening which we attended. On the day of our arrival in Eshkhabad a son was born to Aga Reza, one of the friends of Feerouzay. We were asked to name the baby. Mr. Sprague selected the name Rouh'o'llah, which gave evident satisfaction. On the fifth day after the child's birth we all gathered at the house where a feast had been prepared. Tables were spread on a broad piazza overlooking a garden. The baby was brought out and held up for inspection, prayers and tablets were chanted, and before the refreshments were served a translation of one of *Mrs. Waite's poems was also chanted.

Unfortunately, we were limited as to time and were unable to travel further into Turkestan, where there are other Bahai centers. While in Eshkhabad we met several friends from Merve, Samarkhand and Khokhand (which latter is the extreme eastern end of Turkestan near the confines of China), and it was difficult to resist the urgent and pressing invitations to visit their cities and the Bahais there.

Our departure from Eshkhabad was as much

*One of the American Bahais.

of an occasion as our arrival had been. It seemed as if every person we had met while there was at the station to bid us adieu. Then, at several stations along the route of travel, we were again met by the same good friends who had welcomed us before. Three of our good Oriental brothers accompanied us from Eshkhabad to Baku, where we arrived, after two nights and one day of travel.

The two days spent in Baku, between our second arrival and our departure for Persia, passed in much the same way as had our previous visit. We were constantly with the friends and on the move from one meeting or entertainment to the next. Quite the same crowd escorted us again to the quay, this time there being no possibility of the authorities making trouble for us, as we were to land upon Persian—not Russian—soil.

In going from Russia into Persia the Bahai is struck by the difference in the outward attitude in relation to The Cause of the Friends in those two countries. In Russia they are outspoken about the Faith, because they are protected, while in Persia it is often with difficulty that one is able to recognize the Bahais, because they dare not always manifest their real selves on account of the persecution. One instance of this happened on board the steamer from Baku as she was entering Persian waters.

Before sailing we were told that there were some spies aboard and, in case we were questioned as to our business, to be careful with our replies. Consequently, when I was ap-

proached by a tall young man wearing a Russian cap and long military coat, who persisted in questioning me regarding my sojourn in Baku and my destination and friends in Persia, I intimated as plainly as possible, without actually telling him so, that I did not desire his company. Nevertheless, he pushed the matter by asking if I did not know various people in Baku, mentioning certain Bahais who lived there. Something, either in my reply or perhaps in my evasion of his question, seemed to give him the cue he sought. We were seated at a table on the deck of the steamer, and reaching under the table he grasped my hand, at the same time pronouncing The Greatest Name, the Bahai greeting—"Allaho'Abha!" My chagrin at having so sedulously tried to avoid this man was only counteracted by the pleasure of meeting him as a friend and brother. We had supper together, followed by a conversation which lasted late into the night. He was a student of engineering in a college in Baku and was then taking a vacation trip into Persia. Before the steamer reached Enzalee, where we landed, our friend had disembarked at an intermediate port on his way into the interior.

The contrast between the eastern and southern shores of the Caspian Sea is most striking. The former, or that of Turkestan, is arid and sterile, while the latter, or that of Persia, is most luxuriantly clothed with verdure. As the steamer neared the coast the very air teemed

with vegetation and insect life. The sea being very shallow about Enzalee, in rough weather vessels have difficulty in making the port. Fortunately for us there was no sea on, so the landing was easily accomplished.

Mirza Taghi Khan, who had accompanied us from Eshkhabad, recognized a Bahai brother in the custom-house office, where we had some formalities to attend to in entering our luggage, but it not being advisable there to enter into salutations and conversation with this friend, we simply exchanged fraternal and understanding glances and passed on.

From Enzalee we reembarked for Peere Bazaar en route for Resht—a trip of three or four hours. The boat was rowed and poled across the lagoons, which here begin near the sea coast, extending inland for some distance. After a time we entered an inlet, whereupon the crew descended to a towpath and towed the craft to the bazaar, where we landed.

I wish I might adequately describe this boat ride. It was so typical of Persia that nothing could have formed a better introduction to that country and to her people. The absolute simplicity of the mode of transportation, with the absence of all hustle and bustle, made it seem quite like a pleasure excursion where time was no object whatever.

On the stern of the boat was constructed a rude framework upon which was stretched an awning under which we made ourselves comfortable, reclining on cushions. The lagoon was bordered by thickets of reeds and rushes, and at several points we saw buffaloes feeding

on rushes, their great black hairless backs protruding from the water, giving them the appearance of amphibious monsters.

As we entered the inlet we passed close to huddles of huts, where we were able to obtain a first glimpse of the domestic life of the country people. Here in the lowlands, where timber is plenty, the houses of the poorer people are built of a light unhewn timber framework, which is thatched and walled with reeds and rushes, and, in some cases, plastered with mud. On account of the humidity of the marshes the floor is usually raised several feet above the ground, allowing a circulation of air beneath the house.

We were rather rudely awakened from this dreamlike atmosphere of simple life and poetic travel by the confusion which accompanied our landing at Peere Bazaar. Surrounded by a score of gesticulating natives, each of whom laid ahold of at least one of our many articles of impedimenta, we made our way up a steep bank to a large building which housed the shops of the Bazaar. After a heated discussion of some length with a carriage driver—a discussion in which each member of the assembled crowd took part—a bargain was made, so we mounted and began the drive toward the city of Resht, only a few miles distant.

On the highroads of Persia one sees almost every aspect of the life of the people of the lower classes. At every turn and between the turns are *tchi khanehs* or tea houses, where the people gather to partake of tea, their national beverage. These buildings always have large

doorways opening toward the road, and, in some cases, even the whole side of the house is formed of movable shutters, which, when removed, give the house the character of a great porch. Against the wall, usually opposite the doorway, is the sakkou, a stand upon which rests the samovar or tea urn. This stand is often quite an elaborate affair, somewhat resembling a church altar with its series of steps and shelves, upon which are displayed lamps, tea utensils and the like, which form the necessary culinary outfit of the establishment. On a broad, low seat extending about the walls of the room sit, in the Persian fashion, with their feet drawn up under them, the customers drinking their tea, and smoking their large water pipes. Here often a minstrel is heard singing his lay to an accompaniment played upon a guitar-like instrument, while oftentimes professional story-tellers or travelers entertain the crowd with tales and anecdotes. The Persian is undoubtedly the most social of all men, and this characteristic is the first and last impressed upon the traveler as he journeys through the country, for he observes it in every grade of society.

On arriving in Resht, we drove to the house of one of the Bahai friends. The master of the house was not at home, but after we explained to the servants that we had come for a visit they made us very welcome, serving a lunch, after which, according to the custom of the country, we were put to bed for an afternoon nap. After sleeping for an hour or more I awoke, and, looking out into the next room,

saw there our host quietly seated waiting for us to awake. Though I had never met this good friend I recognized him from having seen his photograph, and on going out into the next room he greeted me with the hospitable and customary embrace of the Orient.

Our thought had been to stay at Resht only over night, but when we found ourselves in the hands of the friends there it was difficult to break away. After much talking they decided to allow us to continue our journey at the expiration of three days.

In the late afternoon of the day we arrived, we began to receive calls from friends who had been notified of our arrival. On account of the persecution of our people in Resht not more than nineteen or twenty gathered in the the house at any one time, but there was a constant coming and going until late in the night. Everyone was anxious to hear the latest news from Acre and also of the work in the West. Mr. Sprague was kept quite busy talking. Not speaking Persian, my conversation was limited to the few who spoke English and French. However, this was not without its advantages, for it gave me an opportunity for observing many things which otherwise might have escaped me.

After dinner, which was served between 10 and 11 o'clock at night, we mounted to a balcony overlooking the neighboring houses and gardens, where coffee was served. Here we sat talking of The Cause until a late hour. The stillness of the nights in the Orient is impressive. Here we were in the heart of a large

city, yet save for the occasional cry of a night watchman, or a singer chanting, or the tinkling of the bells of a caravan passing in the distance there was nothing to break the silence. This, with the brilliancy of the firmament and the refreshing breezes of the night in contrast with the parching heat of the day, makes the night the time when the Oriental people really live.

Under such climatic conditions it is not surprising that the Oriental has turned his attention from things material to things immaterial, from the practical to the poetic, and from the outer world of nature to the inner world of the spirit. Things spiritual have always had their first fruition and growth in the Orient, and from there they have found their way to the West, where they have become the moving factor in our lives and the basis of our civilization.

It was in Persia that the wise men of old read from the heavens of the approaching birth of Jesus, the Christ, before they went westward to welcome and pay homage to Him, The Messiah. It was from the Orient that Christ's message went forth to the western world—the fruits of the spirit of which we in the West are now enjoying—for the most enlightened civilization of the present day is the fruit of the spiritual awakening of man through the Christ.

But now another note has sounded throughout the world. Baha'o'llah, the Promised One of all religions, has appeared in order to unite all peoples of all faiths, and it was with His

followers that we lived and traveled in the East. Surely no western travelers in those distant lands ever had so warm a reception as we did—at times entertained in the places of the wealthy, and at other times in the simplest of mud dwellings along the wayside; yet everywhere with the same heartfelt hospitality. The fact that one was able to serve a banquet, and another but a cup of tea, in no way seemed to restrict the warmth of the meeting nor their desire to share with others.

With the Bahais the tie of faith is the strongest of ties. Though two Bahais may meet but for a few moments it is as if they had always been friends. Westerners have written and said much about the treachery of the Oriental, while but scanty if any mention is made of him as a friend. Westerners see the wrong side of Eastern character, because they usually go to the East to plunder—not to court—for most times they go to the East to enrich themselves at the expense of the Oriental. This is easy and possible because of the superior practical education of the West, but, in turn, it has its reactionary effect upon both peoples, for it increases the natural abyss between Occident and Orient and calls forth the worst characteristics of both. But how different is all this with those who go to the East in the Bahai spirit of brotherhood to give and to win and not to take. They find friends in every city and hamlet, and many a friendly door open to them along the roadside and caravan route, for, through the uniting spirit of the Bahai teaching, the greatest degree of

fraternity and friendship exists among its followers. Through this spiritual power the highest and most noble characteristics of man's soul are developed and become his ruling instincts.

The three days spent in Resht passed quickly. Here we had our first glimpse of the home life of the people of Persia, for we were with the friends all the time, going from one home to the next, for a meal here or for tea there. We always met small groups of people, wisdom not permitting the holding of large gatherings on account of the opposition and trouble brought about by the unbelievers. I recall one day when we had gathered, nineteen in number, in the upper part of a dwelling. The friend who chanted the prayers and holy verses used caution in modulating his voice, so that it might not carry to the street below, lest it might attract the attention of unfriendly ears. During this meeting a commotion took place in the street beneath the windows of the room in which we sat. This was caused by an altercation between some passers-by. For a moment every one in the chamber held his breath, until one of the men, cautiously approaching a window, satisfied himself that there was no danger. I will never forget this picture. The assembled Believers, exchanging glances which bespoke experiences of past troubles and persecutions, while at the far end of the room stood the friend cautiously peering out into the street through the partially closed shutter.

Much suffering and trouble has made the Persian Bahais vigilant and cautious in evading the troubles heaped upon them by the Musselmans, yet at the same time it has made them strong in faith and ready to withstand the most dire calamity and even martyrdom in the Cause. Once I remonstrated with some friends against their being seen walking in the streets with Mr. Sprague and me, lest this should cause trouble, whereupon one answered me that no bodily harm could befall Mr. Sprague and me because we were Occidentals, for whom even the fanatical Moslems have a certain respect, while, as for themselves, they were ready at all times to be added to the great army of Bahai martyrs. Though dispassionately said, the speaker but voiced the sentiment of the Persian Bahais in general, the sincerity of which has often been demonstrated by the vast numbers who willingly and with joy have sacrificed property, family and life in the path of Baha.

Teheran is about 225 miles from Resht by the carriage road. This road, built and maintained by Russian enterprise, is an excellent piece of engineering, and in recent years has made the trip to the capital one of comparative ease and comfort. A well organized system of relay stations affords changes of horses along the route, so if the traveler be pressed for time the entire trip may be made in forty-eight or fifty hours. However, this traveling day and night without rest is fatiguing, so we

found it better to travel by night, resting in the middle of the day when the sun was highest.

Accordingly, Mr. Sprague, Mirza Taghi Khan and I set out from Resht for Teheran. Several of the good friends accompanied us to a point without the city limits, where we changed from the light carriage in which we had come to a heavy traveling coach drawn by four horses, which was to convey us to our destination. Here parting greetings were exchanged and we started on our cross-country journey.

For some distance our way led through the rice fields of the lowlands which border the Caspian Sea and where the sea once extended until driven back by alluvial deposits brought down from the mountains. Then, winding up a broad valley, we found ourselves amid the heavily wooded foot hills of the Elburz range. Making stops every three or four hours to change horses gave us opportunity to refresh ourselves with tea and food at the post-kbanehs (post-houses) along the route.

At various points we were met by Bahai friends who had been notified of our coming. At one place a friend was very disappointed that we could not remain for dinner, but, as we had dined shortly before, it was impossible, and we did not have time to remain until the next meal. To our surprise, a few hours later, while stopping at a post-khaneh, we had a phone message from an inn a couple of hours ahead saying that our friend, with whom we were not able to dine, had ar-

ranged by phone that we should be his guests there that evening, even though he could not be there to feast with us. The object of the message sent us from the inn was to inquire what we might like for dinner in order that all might be in readiness when we arrived.

In one place I well remember we were met by a young man who had lived in Shiraz. He took us into his little house, consisting of but one room. Simple as was this abode we had no more hearty welcome anywhere. Searching in the depths of a chest he produced pamphlets and Bahai greetings printed in Washington, which had found their way thither and were being preserved along with other treasures relating to The Cause. Here we remained for tea, but, as our time was limited, we felt we must decline a very pressing invitation to remain for the night. Our young friend, disappointed at not seeing more of us, took the fourth place in the coach and journeyed along with us in order that the visit might be prolonged.

Shortly before our arrival in Persian territory, the country had been greatly stirred by the bombardment of the Parliament in Teheran by the troops of the Shah, and of the massacre and imprisonment of a number of the members of that unfortunate body. This action upon the part of the Imperial party was the outcome of a long disagreement between the Shah and the Constitutionalists—a political matter which for some time had agitated the country.

As we journeyed onward, our friend spoke

at some length of these political troubles which were occupying the attention of every one, at the same time saying that the Bahais had remained neutral in the hope of helping the condition of the country along the lines of peace and arbitration rather than by strife and bloodshed. Later on he informed us that several Constitutionalist fugitives, on their way from Teheran to exile in Europe, were hourly expected to pass over that portion of the route; so we kept an eye ahead, hoping to obtain a glimpse of the expected party.

By this time the road had entered between high and barren mountains with scarcely a vestige of vegetation, for we were leaving behind us the fertile lowlands and ascending the mountains which form the northern buttress of the great central plateau of Persia. To add to the dismalness of the scene night was closing in and gusts of wind mingled with rain and flashes of lightning made the falling darkness more intense, while peals of distant thunder broke the monotony of the clatter of the horses' hoofs and the rumble of the coach.

More and more the mountain sides encroached upon the valley, until the road entered a deep gorge in the rocks. To one side towered an almost perpendicular cliff; on the other descended a chasm, in the depths of which dashed a mountain torrent on its turbulent way to the lands below. While passing through this defile, the pent-up fury of the storm broke with all its force. Suddenly a shout was heard ahead, and we peered out into the gloom just in time to see three coaches

pass in quick succession. With the first came a flash of lightning that revealed to us the anxious and haggard faces of its occupants--two of the fugitives in their flight. In an instant they were gone, and the noise of the coaches was lost in the distance.

In a few moments a bridge over the ravine and an abrupt turn in the road brought us out into a broad upland valley, where the storm had ceased, and, shortly, we drew up before the house of a Bahai friend in the village of Mangile, to find a welcome awaiting us. Here we took refuge, and in an upper chamber seated ourselves about a table, upon which was spread a tempting meal.

After supper we sat talking for a time and listening to some music, which our friend, who had lived in Shiraz, made upon a Persian guitar. Being tired, both Mr. Sprague and I fell asleep. Awaking about three hours later, we found the sky perfectly clear and the world bathed in the brilliant moonlight of the East. So, parting with our good host and the young man, who had accompanied us thither, we set out again upon our journey, refreshed in body and soul by the hospitality and the affectionate meeting with these Bahai brothers.

The ancient city of Khazvin is the only place of importance between Resht and Teheran. It being one of the principal Bahai centers of Persia, we planned to tarry there in order to meet the Believers. About four hours from the city, we stopped at a post-khaneh to sleep

and rest, for we knew that on arrival in a Bahai community we would be much feted and have little opportunity for repose.

As soon as we had settled ourselves in the inn, the sound of carriages entering the court yard announced the arrival of other guests. Surveying the newcomers from a window, I counted eight men as they descended from two carriages. Suddenly I recognized one of the number, a certain physician of Khazvin, with whom I had corresponded and whose features I recalled from having seen several photographs of him. These friends, hearing of our approach, hastily joined themselves into a party, coming over the road to meet us. The greeting was a hearty one. Our friends had not come empty handed, for, as soon as the first salutations were over, trays of delicious fruits were produced, tea was served, and thus we spent an hour or more in conversation and feasting.

While during very recent years, the Bahais have been comparatively tranquil in Khazvin, nevertheless, even now, great care has to be observed and every precaution is taken against giving people the slightest ground to criticise or make trouble for the Believers. Accordingly, two hours before dusk, we all set out for the city, entering the gates under cover of the night. After wending our way through many narrow and tortuous streets, some lined with shops and brilliantly lighted, others flanked by high walls and dark, we found ourselves at the house of the Bahai doctor.

A small, low, and heavily-barred doorway,

piercing a massive brick wall, formed the street entrance to the house. On entering, we found ourselves in a small court yard lighted by many lamps, about which were placed plants and shrubs in tubs and pots. Behind this, to one side, opened a large court containing a garden, while, upon the other side, was the entrance to the house. Entering the latter, and halting for a few moments in an antechamber, to remove the dust from our clothing and wash our hands and faces at a small fountain placed there for the purpose, we were taken to the guest room. As soon as we arrived, friends began to call in small groups, coming and going until dinner was served, which, according to the custom of the place, was just before bed time. After dinner we went to our room and, tired by travel and the social events of the day, we fell asleep, not awaking until the sun was quite high.

To the Oriental, all hours of the twenty-four are the same. He is quite as apt to have a caller at sunrise as at sunset, and he thinks nothing of starting forth on a cross-country journey at 1 or 2 o'clock in the night. When we awoke about 8 o'clock the morning after our arrival in Khazvin, we found several friends assembled to see us, while, to our chagrin, we learned that others had come and, not able to remain, had gone while we slept. As in other places, our stay here was one continuous round of visits, something being planned for every hour of the day. On our first afternoon we were entertained at tea at the house of a certain Bahai merchant. This

meeting was so typically Persian and picturesque in its setting, that I must give a brief description of it.

Escorted by some of the friends, we went through narrow streets, until we came to the house of the merchant. A simple doorway in a wall of sun-dried and burnt bricks opened on a flight of steps, which descended to the level of the outer courtyard of the house. Crossing this court, in the center of which was a basin of water surrounded by flowers, we were taken by an exterior staircase to the upper floor of the house, and, passing through an antechamber, we entered the room where the friends awaited us.

I will never forget the first impression of this meeting. Imagine a large room with a low paneled ceiling, a long table, a mass of color with its fruits and viands, while the air was filled with a fragrance of flowers placed about in profusion; broad open windows, the transoms of which were filled with intricate fretwork and colored glass, looking down upon a series of gardens that stretched off toward the country, with a background of distant mountains; then, in the midst of this beautiful and harmonious scene, forty or more Bahais, seated about the room in their many colored robes—it was a picture never to be forgotten.

Men of all ages were there. Some who, after many years of hardship and service in The Cause, were entering into the evening of this life, while others, young and in full vigor of manhood, were in the prime of their

time of service. I well remember two—father and son—the older man, blind and feeble in body, yet with a keen mind and an enthusiastic soul, while the son, strong in body, was eyes and limbs for his father. Thus they had traveled together and taught in many towns and provinces and were at that time teaching in Khazvin.

We were given seats at the head of the table, and, after the usual service of chanting, feasting commenced with an interchange of ideas and items of Bahai interest, both Occidental and Oriental. After the feast we took a stroll through the gardens, and at dusk, bidding adieu to our host and his guests, we returned to the house of the good hakim (physician).

Even in the earliest days of The Holy Cause Khazvin was an important center. Kurratu'l-Ayn, to whom The Bab gave the title Jenab-i-Tahira (Her Highness, the Most Pure), was of Khazvin. Her fame as a poetess, as a heroine and a servant in the days of The Bab, and as a martyr in The Cause, is well known amongst the Bahai friends. It is in the garden of her house in Khazvin that in recent years the Believers have constructed a Mashrak-el-Azcar.

One evening at dusk we were conducted thither. Following one of our friends, we were soon lost in the labyrinth of streets of the old part of the city. Going through the ancient bazaars, with their high vaulted roofs, dimly lighted here and there by lanterns, one could easily imagine himself in a great subterranean world. Carefully we picked our way along,

fearful of dropping into an open cistern or water-way—quite possible to achieve in such places—until we at last descended from the street into the ancient court yard of the home of Kurratu'l-'Ayn. From here we were taken into the garden, at the farther end of which stood the Mashrak-el-Azcar. Here, under the portico, many friends were grouped to meet us. Then we entered the building, where the usual entertainment of chanting and a collation was accorded us.

Within the precincts of the temple lived a very old believer,—one of the original followers of The Bab—who entertained us by recounting many interesting incidents connected with the early days of the movement and with the life of Kurratu'l-'Ayn. On leaving the Mashrak-el-Azcar, we found the garden had been illuminated by lamps, placed about the fountains and along the walks. Passing along an alley of trees and shrubs, which led toward the ancient dwelling, we saw in the distance the veiled figure of a woman standing in the doorway, lights on either side of the portal making her clearly visible in contrast with the surrounding darkness. This was the daughter of our venerable host, the teacher who lived here, and she awaited us with a word of welcome and of greeting. As she spoke she parted slightly her chador or veil. We, in turn, gave her the greetings of the maid servants of the Bahai assemblies of the West, asking her to convey the same to the women Bahais of Khazvin. Then, taking leave of the Believers, we ascended to the street, and, with the assist-

ance of several friends provided with lanterns, we returned to the house of the hospitable doctor.

In contrast with this meeting in the Mashrak-el-Azcar, I will describe a visit we made the following morning to one of the government prisons. A party of several of us, after walking through a most beautiful public garden, laid off with avenues of stately cypress trees, stopped before some government buildings used to house a garrison. Near these buildings was the city prison, and, as we stood, there proceeded from the open doorway a procession of twelve or fifteen prisoners. They were marching in single file, each with a heavy iron collar about his neck, by which he was attached to a long chain, which clanked dolefully, as the line moved slowly across the court yard.

When near us the prisoners halted long enough for us to give them some coins for food. They began telling us their various stories. One had been imprisoned for stealing, another for murder, and so it ran. Later on we went into the dungeon, where other prisoners were chained by the neck to a series of irons in the floor, which kept them lying at full length. I go into these painful details to give an idea of a Persian prison, for in these prisons many Bahais have languished and from them gone forth to martyrdom.

Shortly before sunset one evening we set out for Teheran. Several carriages conveyed a

party of Believers to a certain caravanserai, an hour or more distant from the city, where we all alighted for tea and to bid farewell to one another. One of the friends in Teheran, being notified from Resht of our approach to the capital, had sent a trusted household servant to meet us on the way and render us any possible service. This man joined us in Khazvin, and though we had no special need of him he journeyed onward with us.

It was between 12 and 1 o'clock that night, when we made our first stop at the house of a hitherto unknown friend. We were greeted with the usual hospitality, to which by this time we had become so accustomed that we had almost ceased to wonder at it. It was thought best to remain here for two or three hours for rest before continuing the journey. So, after supper had been served, we were shown to a room, where, removing our outer clothing, we laid ourselves down on divans, expecting to get a little sleep.

Mr. Sprague was remarking that Bahai conditions in Persia were hardly what he had anticipated, for here we were traveling onward to the capital without difficulty, when only a few years previous Bahai blood had flowed in the very places through which we were passing. He had scarcely finished speaking when, from the court yard below our windows, we heard a murmur of voices which grew in intensity until it became a chorus of loud harangues. Though I knew only a few words of Persian, yet I understood from these few and from the angry tones, that some people

were cursing the Bahai Cause and its adherents and particularly our host. In fact his voice we could distinguish from time to time expostulating with the crowd. After a few moments he came to our door to express his regret at the occurrence and to assure us that all was well and that there was no prospect of violence. Again, shortly, we heard his voice outside and the din subsided, though for an hour or more there were spasmodic outbursts of rage coming from various directions out of the darkness.

It seems that a company of soldiers was traveling that way and instead of quartering themselves, as was usual, in the caravanserai, which was near, they preferred the shelter of the yard and garden of our friend, where, against his protests, they proceeded to install themselves. At this juncture we arrived, and under the light of the portico of the house they saw him greet us. Some of the soldiers knew that he was a Bahai, and this fact, together with our hospitable reception, gave sufficient grounds for such a demonstration. Between 3 and 4 o'clock we took our leave. By this time all had quieted down and the agitators, rolled in their blankets, were sleeping on the pavement of the court, while a chorus of snores was all that broke the peace and harmony of the night.

The road from Khazvin to Teheran traverses desolate tracts of arid land, intersected at long intervals by streams, the banks of which are flanked by gardens. In the desert the presence of water gives rise to the most

luxuriant vegetation, but where absent the bleaching bones of beasts of burden, strewing the highways, with here and there a great hungry looking vulture, accentuate the contrast between garden and desert and life and death. This same condition we sensed in the soul life of the people whom we met. Entering various Bahai houses along the route for a meal here and a glass of tea there, we were quickened by the kindness and devotion of these friends. They outwardly manifested the life of the indwelling spirit of their faith. On the other hand, we were constantly reminded of the fanaticism and spiritual darkness of the many whom we passed on the highways—men of various religions and castes, who considered us and all, save those of their own cult, as unclean dogs. Surely, if possible, their stare would have killed, but, as it was, it was only painful. There is no fanaticism so intense as that encountered in the Orient.

One of the prophecies relative to this day is that "the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." Indeed we saw the fulfilment of this marvelous verse, for many of the people, who were kindest to us, had, only a comparatively short time before, been as desert land, untouched by the spirit. Of one man, particularly kind to us, we asked how long he had been a Bahai, thinking that he had acquired his illumination through years of service. To our question he replied, "Thirty-one days," speaking as if it had been a lifetime in itself, and, verily, so it had, for he had been born again. As in the desert the presence of

water gives rise to most luxuriant vegetation, so it is in the desert of men's souls, for, when the life-giving water of the Spirit of God enters, it gives rise to the fruits of the Kingdom.

While crossing a parched plane four or five hours from Teheran, our carriage broke down. After some little difficulty, the damage was sufficiently repaired to allow us to proceed at a moderate pace for a mile or more, until we arrived at a post-khaneh kept by a friend, who, when we explained that we would be obliged to remain there for several hours for repairs, quite frankly showed his delight at the prospect of a visit. This man was from Esphahan, where our people have suffered much at the hands of the fanatical Moslems, as well as by the oppression of unscrupulous rulers.

In speaking of the Bahais in Persia, and their relations with those in the West, this believer struck at the keynote, for he said that in his country the Bahais had suffered such long and strenuous persecution and trouble, that they had become tired and heartsick, and needed the association and moral support of the friends of the West. How often we thought of the reverse conditions existing in the West, where we are in need of this spirit, which the Oriental Bahais have received through suffering. The West needs what the East has to give it and the East needs what the West has to give it. This interchange can take place only as the two come together in love and harmony. In the past Occidentals

have gone to the Orient and Orientals to the Occident, but because of an absence of basic unity—religious unity—no lasting good has come to either. Now how different is this when, in the Bahai Cause, Easterners go West and Westerners go East, where they meet on the common ground of faith, for then each returns to his own country and people, refreshed in soul and buoyant with a force and knowledge, which help him to face his problems and demonstrate to him the conquering power of spiritual oneness, which is the mission of the Bahai Cause.

Taking leave of this friend from Esphahan, we proceeded eastward toward Teheran. About two hours before sunset, we sighted the domes and minarets of the capital, rich in color, rising from the floor of the plain against a background of the snow-clad Elburz. As we neared the city, we saw ahead several carriages driving rapidly toward us. These were at first distinguishable only by the clouds of dust which enveloped them. Then, as they drew quite near to us, we distinguished the occupants eagerly looking out ahead. Instinctively we knew these to be Bahais, and, almost before the drivers could rein in the horses, they had descended and surrounded our carriage.

After an affectionate welcome, we found ourselves laden with flowers which these friends had brought to us. To the traveler of the desert nothing is more refreshing than to bury

his face amid fragrant flowers. After traveling for hours under a parching sun, where there is not a vestige of vegetation, when finally he finds himself within the enclosure of a garden, he really appreciates vegetable life and the fragrance of the flowers. So it is also with us humans, when we meet souls who are alive in the Lord, for their presence is an oasis in the desert of the world and contact with them is soul refreshing and invigorating. Thus we found the flowers, brought us, symbolic of the spiritual aspect of our meeting with the Teheran friends.

Before reaching the city gates, we halted before the entrance of a large and beautiful garden, where we were met by more friends. Entering the garden and passing along beside waterways and avenues of trees and shrubs, we came to an open summer pavilion, where tea and other refreshments were served us.

After the sacred chants, which characterize all reunions of our people in the East, we conversed for a time, delivering messages and letters brought with us from friends in other places, as well as giving accounts of the work in the West. Shortly before sunset, the party entered the city, several of the friends accompanying us to the quarters where it had been arranged that we should be installed.

As I have already stated, just before our entering on Persian soil, there had been revolution and bloodshed in Teheran. By the time, however, that we reached the capital all was tranquil. Had it not been for the ruins and the debris of the buildings, which had been cannon-

aded, there would have been no visible traces of the recent troubles. In fact, we found the Bahais there in the utmost peace and happiness. They had taken no part in the political troubles of the day and were in the good esteem and respect of the government, and now were enjoying unusual privileges. On account of the revolution no gatherings of any nature were allowed by the police, yet upon several occasions the Bahais obtained permission to hold meetings numbering as many as four hundred and more souls. Several of the Bahais had been appointed to high governmental positions and a general spirit of assurance and safety characterized the assembly, which was quite different from anything hitherto known there in the history of The Cause. Now many of the friends in Teheran are known as Bahais and it does not seem to embarrass them, whereas not many years ago it would have meant death. This freedom in the capital bespoke rapid progress in The Cause throughout the country in the near future, because, being the life and center of all things in Persia, the influence of Teheran is widely felt throughout the various cities and provinces.

I will not attempt to give a detailed description of the series of breakfasts, excursions, receptions and dinners which we attended in Teheran, but I will make mention of a few meetings and entertainments, which were typical of the many accorded us. Fortunately, a most tranquil spirit of repose characterizes Bahai entertainments in the East, otherwise we had not been able to keep up

the round as we did, day and night, from week to week. While the spiritual feature of all meetings was the more important, nevertheless one's material wants were never disregarded, for every possible thing was done for our bodily comfort. The social events of the day usually began at sunrise, when tea was served, after which visits were usually received until 9 or 10 o'clock, when we would start forth to the house, where we happened to be lunching that day, or, possibly, on some excursion about the city. Lunch was usually served at noon and was followed by a nap, from which we would be aroused for tea, before going to a late afternoon gathering of Believers, invariably held in some garden--few if any houses being large enough to accommodate these large afternoon reunions. The evenings were always spent at the house of some friend, where we dined, the dinner being served about 11 o'clock.

During my stay in Teheran, there was fear of an uprising of the people, so no one was allowed to circulate in the streets after 11 o'clock at night without a special permit. Several times we had this permission through the kind efforts of friends, while on various other occasions we spent the night at the house where we dined, sleeping usually out of doors, as is the summer custom of the Persians.

At the home of one of the friends of The Cause there was a subterranean bath built for the most part below the level of a garden. This was placed at our disposal during our sojourn there. A flight of steps led from the

ground level down to the vaulted chambers of the bath, which were floored with slabs of marble, while the walls, up to a certain height, were set with rare old tiles. The bath in the East is quite a lengthy process with its hot and cold water douches and massaging, and it is invariably followed by refreshments and conversation and often a nap. After bathing here the morning following our arrival in Teheran, we went into a neighboring garden, where a number of our friends awaited us, and were regaled with sherbet.

One of our good brothers, an Israelite just graduated in medicine, was delegated by the assembly to serve us as guide, to make out a schedule of meetings and entertainments, and to see that we arrived at the appointed places at the scheduled times. I will never cease to marvel at the devotion and unselfish service of this young man. He was with us, practically, all the time and constantly doing all in his power to make everything as agreeable and as comfortable as possible. Had I traveled to Teheran to meet him only, I should have considered my time well spent and a valuable lesson learned. Lessons in brotherly devotion one can see exemplified in the lives of these eastern brothers, for they have suffered for The Cause until friendship and devotion have become dominant characteristics.

Among the many who entertained us were two young men, sons of a noted Bahai teacher and poet, who, together with another son of but twelve years, suffered a martyr's death during one of the later persecutions in Te-

heran. For several years their bodies lay in a common grave, where they had been flung by their executioners. After matters had become more tranquil for the Bahais, in the night, and with the greatest difficulty, their remains were removed and given a befitting entombment.

When we were told of this matter, we asked that we might visit the tomb of these two martyrs. Consequently, the following morning the younger son came and escorted us thither. In the center of a beautiful garden, at some distance from the city, stood the mausoleum. It consisted of a nine-sided chamber, about twenty-five feet in diameter, enclosed by massive walls. Beneath the floor were the two tombs. The building was surrounded by a portico and colonnade. Three flights of steps ascended from the ground to the floor of the portico, while three doors gave access to the interior. Nine avenues diverged from the building to various parts of the garden, while canals of water intersected it in various directions.

Entering the mausoleum, our friend chanted a tablet and prayer written by our teacher, Abdul-Baha, specially to be read when the Bahais gather here. The chanting over, we remained for a few moments in silent prayer before withdrawing to the garden. I wish I might adequately describe the impression produced by the visit to this shrine. We were in a way brought closer than before to the sufferings and heroic sacrifices of the Persian

Bahais, through which the Holy Cause grew and expanded until now it encircles the earth. We in the West little realize the debt of gratitude we owe to the East for the holy teaching which now is given to us so freely, and which we accept while seated at our ease, for it came to us only after it had attained its growth in the Orient, under the fire of the most savage persecution.

The spirit of the friends, who suffered so in Persia, is indeed an inspiration and food for the soul. During the return drive to the city, our young friend spoke of the martyrdom of his father and brother and told us that, often as he walked in the streets, he passed the man who killed them, yet, so happy is he that they were permitted to serve the religion by dying for it, and so strong in his own faith, there is no room left in his soul for harboring enmity for those through whom his troubles came.

I mention this one specific case, which was but one of many. On all sides we heard of the troubles and persecutions of our people, but not once did we hear so much as a suggestion of anything which savored of antagonism or hatred toward the persecutors. This and the unity and solidarity of the Persian Bahais impressed me more than all else in Persia. The strength of a chain is measured by the strength of its individual links. And this is likewise true in the assembly of Believers. The work accomplished by the body is in proportion to the strength and steadfastness of its individual members.

Since returning to America, many people have asked me about the condition of Bahai women in Persia. Compared with our intercourse with men, our intercourse with the women was but slight; nevertheless, from seeing even a few women and by talking with many men upon the subject, we were able to form at least an idea of existing conditions.

In Persia, as in most Oriental countries, the conventions of society demand the seclusion of women. Through the influence of the Bahai teachings, we found our people to be quite rid of that mental attitude so generally held in the Orient—that woman is in every way man's inferior and should be his slave. The Bahais in Persia are doing all in their power for the education and training of women. In a recent tablet from Abdul-Baha, regarding education, he writes of the necessity of the education of boys, and then goes on to demonstrate how much more necessary it is that girls should be educated and trained than boys, because they—the girls—are to be the mothers and the educators and trainers of the coming generation. The attitude of the Bahais in Persia toward women is quite that held by most enlightened people in the West, but, on account of existing social conditions and the persecution of our people, they are not yet able to carry out their ideas and aspirations.

Even after visiting Persia it is quite impossible to comprehend the hatred of the people toward the Bahais. Fanatical by nature and creed-bound, the Oriental hates everything out-

side of his own realm of thought, and when he sees his own people adopting new ideas his wrath is often uncontrollable and he goes forth to kill. By this reign of ignorance some of the difficulties under which the Bahai reformers are working can be imagined. In the early days of the movement, with all the enthusiasm of newly awakened souls, the Believers sought with fervor to bring about quick changes in Persia. They taught unguardedly and raised so much antagonism that The Cause was all but exterminated by the massacres which ensued. Such troubles characterized the days of The First Point—The Bab—and also the beginning of the ministry of Baha'o'llah. However, under the guidance of the latter, the Bahais learned to be cautious and careful in their religious work until now, avoiding disagreement and friction with the opposers, they are peacefully and steadily working and changing ignorance into knowledge and hatred into love.

Under these improving conditions the women are naturally becoming more and more, as we term it in the West, "emancipated." The work is difficult and slow, but it is being accomplished, and here is an open door to us Bahais of the West, a practical way of service, for through our co-operation our brothers and sisters in the East will be helped and encouraged, and through unity with us they will learn many things. On the other hand we will ourselves receive more abundantly than we give. The East has much to give to the West, as well as the West to the

East. This interchange will take place as the two come together in spiritual unity and a practical service one to the other.

One of the most interesting characters, whom we met in Persia, was a certain khanum (lady) of Teheran, a woman of ability as a leader of women. For some time past she had been working assiduously for the spread of the Bahai Cause among women, and for the education and general upliftment of her sex.

In Persia one meets people who, after long or brief sojourns in western Europe, have accumulated certain western ideas, which they have mingled with those of Persian origin, producing a mixture neither one thing nor the other, neither Occidental nor Oriental—ideas which are not applicable to conditions in Persia, because they are the products of a foreign civilization evolved under foreign conditions.

Now, what was most interesting in the working of the Bahai movement in Persia was that it was solving present-day problems in the only practical way, namely, by working from within out—by quickening the soul, from which is begotten the desire for knowledge and for attaining the advantages which go therewith.

This was exemplified in the work of the khanum whom I have mentioned. She was an enlightened soul, holding advanced ideas, not gleaned from foreign sources, but evolved through personal work and service. She was wholly a product of Persia, and was, therefore,

able to understand and to minister unto the needs of those among whom she labored.

I must describe a meeting which we attended at the house of the khanum mentioned, for it gave us a glimpse of Oriental life and conditions hitherto not seen. Our hostess had for some time past discarded her veil and with her husband received men in her house and garden, yet she was obliged, as she explained to us, to veil in the streets on account of attracting too much attention. On this particular afternoon she was holding two receptions at once. Twenty or more of us men were in one room, while in an adjoining room, separated from us by a curtain, was a party of twelve or fifteen ladies, our hostess slipping quietly from one room to the other, serving and entertaining her guests.

After the chanting of tablets, Mr. Sprague and I were asked to tell the ladies in the next room something about their sisters in the West, which we did to the best of our ability, Mr. Sprague speaking in Persian, while my words were translated and spoken through the curtain to the listeners on the other side. Our hostess, it seemed, had hoped that the women in the next room would, on that day, follow her example and unveil. As we spoke of the freedom and independence and higher education of woman in the West, the khanum became more and more enthusiastic, until, finally, she went toward the doorway and, drawing the curtain, began speaking very earnestly to the people in the next room. I could not understand her words, but so stirring was the tone of her

voice, that I caught the spirit of what she was saying. She was calling to her sisters to come forth and lift their veils, saying that it was a rare opportunity to do so then, for we from the West were there, who were accustomed to seeing women's faces. At the expiration of several minutes her words had the desired effect, for the women arose and drawing aside their veils with one accord entered the room.

The men made place for the ladies by retreating to the other side of the room, while the newcomers found seats. When the women had arisen to the situation, they were quite equal to it. Then it was the men who were ill at ease. In fact, their embarrassment was contagious, for even I began to be uneasy and scarcely dared to take a good look at the faces opposite. Sherbets and other refreshments were served and the chanting continued.

Bit by bit the men gained their ease, but, as their embarrassment passed, the women seemed to lose courage. Little by little the veils were drawn over their faces, until all were practically veiled. Then one who was seated near the door moved as if to leave, whereupon all arose and like a flock of affrighted birds fluttered from the room. Curious as this may seem to one accustomed to western conventionalities, yet it showed that these Bahai women were awake to the advantages of the western women, as well as to their own disadvantage. I was particularly impressed by the possibilities for work among the women of Persia by the Bahai women of the west. The eagerness with which these women listened

to our account of western life in itself showed that the time was ripe and that they were anxious and waiting to be taught.

As we were leaving the house, the khanum took from her neck an interesting necklace of mother of pearl and silver, a gift to her from a princess of the royal household, and handed it to me, saying that it was for the Bahai women in America, and with it went the love and greeting of the Bahai maid servants in Teheran. On my return to America, I entrusted this souvenir to the care of Mrs. Isabella D. Brittingham, who has already organized a system of correspondence between some of the meetings of Bahai women in America with gatherings of women in various cities in Persia. This is but the beginning of a great work for the women of our western assemblies to do among their sisters of the East. Through correspondence the way will be opened for western women to go to those distant parts as teachers, nurses, physicians, and what they will be able to accomplish cannot be estimated.

One very interesting morning was spent in visiting one of the leading boys' schools in Teheran. On account of the attitude of the Moslems, this institution is not known generally as a Bahai school. However, it is in reality in the hands of the Bahais. From the directors down through the teachers and students the majority were of our faith. We were taken around through the various class rooms,

where over two hundred boys were engaged in reciting and study. Before starting on our travels, Mr. Sprague had planned to remain for some time in Teheran, so he was very much pleased when told that they needed a teacher of English in this school, for he was glad to take the work. Shortly after I left Teheran, his duties as teacher there commenced, where he now is working. I understand that in other parts of Persia teachers of English are needed among the Bahais. Undoubtedly, in the near future, the way will be open for Bahais from the West to go to the East to fill these positions. This is a good field for work in The Cause, because the people there are greatly helped and strengthened by intercourse the western Bahais.

One Saturday afternoon, about an hour before sunset, we were conducted through the bazaars to the Jewish quarter to the house of a certain doctor, where a hundred and more of Israelitish Bahais were gathered to welcome us. During the walk thither, we passed a place of Bahai interest, namely, the house where Abdu-Baha was born on May 23, 1844, the same day upon which The Bab declared Himself. At the end of a street one can see a small second-story arcade, behind which is the room in which our great teacher first saw the light of the world. This house was not open to us, so we gazed upon it from without for a few moments and then passed on.

Although there are no lines of distinction whatever between the Bahais, yet, in places where persecution exists, those previously of

the same faith meet together, not wishing to attract too much attention. In Teheran there are between twenty and thirty weekly meetings held in various quarters of the city, so that all may easily participate. The Jewish meeting which I mention was composed chiefly of Jewish Believers, but there were also present Christians, Moslems and Zoroastrians. In Persia there is a type of Jew which we in the West seldom see. There the Jews have lived in their communities for centuries, and consequently have kept their original type and spirit far more than those who have lived for generations wandering amongst the various nations of the world. Like their orthodox brethren in the West, the Jews in Persia have retained their ancient faith in the fulfillment of the prophecies of their scriptures, and they look for the Messiah and the regeneration of the whole world. This has made them particularly open to the Bahai Message, and in places there are whole communities of them who have accepted the faith. Hamadan is the chief center of Jewish Bahais in Persia. Here they have their own schools and are carrying on other active and progressive works.

At the Jewish meeting I mentioned, several of the older men in long robes and turbans spoke, welcoming us and expressing their joy at uniting spiritually with us in accepting Baha'o'llah as the promised latter-day Messiah, through whose teaching they now accept the Christ whom their forefathers rejected. This meeting was one of the most memorable of our travels. The reunion over, a dinner was served,

after which we mounted to a terraced roof. Here mats, rugs, cushions and bedding had been spread, and it was not long before each had made himself comfortable for the night. I lay awake for some time looking up at the stars and thinking over the significance of that evening's gathering. This was the beginning of the time when all peoples, Jew and Gentile, will be united in His Kingdom.

The first large meeting of Bahais which we attended in Teheran was a Zoroastrian or Parsee reunion. This was held in a garden belonging to a friend of The Cause—a garden which was the most beautiful I visited while in Persia. Several artificial lakes, surrounded and separated by forest trees, vistas extending off toward the north, affording views of the distant mountains, with series of avenues and walks, flanked by water-ways and flower beds, formed a beautiful setting for the two palaces and several pavilions which were in the midst of the garden. The place of meeting was under the broad portico of the smaller of the two palaces, which was originally built by the much beloved and unfortunate Atabok-Azam (who died by the assassin's hand), Prime Minister to the late Mozaffer-Ed-Din-Shah. The pavement of the portico was carpeted, while chairs were placed about for some of the guests, others sitting down Persian fashion on the rugs. One of the features of the meeting was the chanting of an original poem of welcome to us, which was written by one of the friends—the whole assembly joining in the refrain. Several of the friends present spoke

to us regarding the Zoroastrian prophecies which were fulfilled in the coming of The Bab and Baha'o'llah, and explained that in the Zoroastrian teaching the final unity of all people was taught and that now the Parsees were accepting the Bahai teaching as that which their people had long hoped to realize—the uniting of all men in the brotherhood of The Kingdom.

On still another like occasion, in the afternoon, we met in another garden, where a large number of Moslem Bahais were gathered to greet us. Because of the crowd all could not be accommodated in any one place, so they were grouped in various parts of the garden, thus forming several centers. As the twilight fell, lamps were placed about the fountains and along the walks, and then the chanting began. We sat near a basin of water about which were grouped many men, soldiers from the Shah's cassaque guard, in their red uniforms, while their officers wore blue, together with men wearing robes of many and varied colors. These and the lights with their reflection in the water, and the natural beauty of the place, with the distant strains of chanting, which reached our ears alternately from the various groups of friends scattered throughout the garden, made an impression which will long remain with me.

Here among the Moslem Bahais we heard the same story of how they believed because of their own prophecies which foretold the coming of the Lord in these latter days and the establishment of His Kingdom. In many

ways they expressed their joy and satisfaction at having us with them. One remarked to me that more of the joy of the kingdom was realized, when those of different faiths were brought together in this Cause, than by the uniting of those who had previously held the same faith. In the east, where the devotees of the various religions hate one another so cordially, the contrast is indeed striking when we see them uniting in the Bahai Cause and fraternizing as members of one family.

One of the friends who entertained us, a Jewish doctor, together with another Jewish physician, is running a dispensary and hospital in Teheran. One morning we went there for a visit. A cheerful court yard with its fountain and flowers, from which opened the various rooms of the building, with their accommodation for twenty-eight patients, formed the necessary elements of a hospital—an institution of which Persia is much in need. Comparing this hospital with ours in the West, it seemed very primitive, but, considering it along with the conditions of the country, it was far, far beyond the local standard of hygiene in its appointments. These friends are laboring under great difficulties, as do all those who try to lift the masses of inert humanity in the East. Nevertheless, their work is gaining in proportion and in momentum. They, too, need the helping hand of the western friends. A Bahai woman physician working with them could accomplish much, both of a

spiritual as well as a physical nature. She could reach the women and the inner life of the people by ways not open in the East to men of the profession, and through service and example her influence as an educator would be far-reaching.

After the work of ministering to the health of the people in Persia, the most important thing is the teaching of industries. There is a great field for industrial work in all parts of that country. Persia is rich in mineral deposits and in other natural resources. These must be developed, and for the best good of all must be developed by the people themselves. In order for them to do so they must first be taught. Now the sons of the wealthy go from Persia to the various capitals of Europe for educational purposes, but that is not practical nor sufficient. It is necessary that special and advanced education be within the reach of the mass of the people. To the youth brought up in the simplicity of Oriental surroundings life in an European metropolis is filled with temptations which he is not calculated to withstand. Thus many, after years of schooling abroad, lose their natural charm and simplicity, without having acquired the real virtues of the West. They fall away from their own country and people and at the same time are not fitted for life in western countries.

The salvation of Persia must—like that of all peoples—be worked out from within. She has great possibilities, and through the practical education of her sons and daughters she will

lift herself to her ancient prosperity and place among the great nations of the world. Now her vital moral forces are spent, corruption, oppression and laxity of morals hold despotic sway over her people, keeping them down to the earth. Her predominating religion, that of Islam, once so powerful a factor for the betterment of the Orient, has lost its power as a religion and now nothing of it remains save creed, dogma and fanaticism. The only thing which can rejuvenate Persia and save her is a spiritual uplift that shall quicken the soul of her people, infusing into them that force needed to redeem it.

In Persia the Bahais are laying the foundation of this great national uplift, but now they are at a point where they need the co-operation of the Bahais of the West. The more we in the West correspond with our brothers in the Orient, the more we go there to travel and to live and work among them, the more we will be helping them in their great task of bettering humanity.

At last the day appointed for me to take leave of Mr. Sprague and the other friends arrived. I was loath to turn westward, but my vacation was limited, and, as Abdul-Baha, in Acre, had asked me to return to see him on my way home I felt I must be off. At an early hour I was taken with my luggage to the garden without the city, where we had been entertained on the day of our arrival. Here the day was spent in one continuous re-

ception, for almost every one whom we had met in Teheran, numbering hundreds, joined the gathering at some time during the protracted festivities. At noon we all walked to one end of the garden, where the ground was covered with rugs, upon which was spread in Persian fashion cloths laden with food and flowers. Sitting about on the ground we lunched, and then we had a nap under the shelter of a summer house, followed by tea and more feasting. Shortly before dusk, we parted with all save about twenty of our friends, who accompanied us into the city to the near-by house of a Bahai, where we spent the evening in conversation, dining at the usual hour of 11 o'clock.

Mirza Taghi Khan, our constant companion since the Krasnovodsk affair, was now returning to Eshkhabad, which was fortunate for me, for our ways lay together again from Teheran to Baku. A little after midnight our carriage was announced, and, with the assistance of many hands, we were soon settled therein with our articles of luggage about us, and, after many adieus, we left this little group of friends standing in the flickering torchlight looking after us as the carriage rolled away.

A few minutes brought us to the Khazvin gate, where with some difficulty our coachman aroused the sleepy turnkey, who, staggering to his feet, unlocked and opened the ponderous city gates, which, with a rattling of chains and a clanking of bars closed on us as we drove forth into the night. Another starry night it was, too. Far off in the west hung low upon

the horizon a brilliant planet which seemed as a guiding star, indicating, as of old, the direction of the Holy Land.

The down journey from Teheran to Resht was quite the same in character as had been the up journey, for we were greeted by the same friends and in the same hospitable way. The drive was broken only at Khazvin, where we spent two days and a night with our friend, the doctor. Hearing of our coming, he met us on the road as before and escorted us into the city. This time we were in open carriages and it not being wise for us to be seen together we parted just without the city walls, his carriage entering by one gate, ours by another. This time while in Khazvin, I had the opportunity of visiting the Bahai school, where about fifty young boys were studying under the supervision of instructors. One of these teachers spoke French fluently and he acted as interpreter for me during the visit.

An unbroken ride of thirty-six hours brought us from Khazvin to Resht, where we arrived the middle of the morning, while the steamer by which we expected to sail was booked to leave Enzalee at 10.30 o'clock that night. After discussing the situation with the friends we decided to drive the twenty-two miles from Resht to Enzalee over a turnpike road, which traverses the marshes and lowlands separating Resht from the port. The Believers could not comprehend why we should arrive and leave both in the same day and it was with some difficulty that we begged

off from remaining three days until the sailing of the next steamer.

Accordingly, after an unavoidable delay, we set out. The further we drove the worse became the road, until, finally, the horses could hardly draw the carriage, the wheels of which were half way up to their hubs in sand and loose earth. Thus so much time was lost that we did not reach Enzalee until the steamer had sailed. The only thing to do was to return to Resht. Leaving at midnight we drove all night, arriving at Resht at daybreak. It was our third night in a carriage, and between the mosquitoes and insects, a drenching fog which rolled in from the sea, and the dismal cries of jackals, with which the forests abounded, we had a night of it. In Resht, instead of being dismayed at our plight, our friends rejoiced at the prospect of a continued visit, and in the end I was not at all sorry either for the experience, for we had three more very pleasant days in Persia. On the third day, in good season, three of our friends escorted us to Enzalee and saw us safely on board the steamer for Baku.

On the quay in Baku, we were met by several friends, who had been notified of our coming. Remaining here but a few hours, I parted with my faithful friend and traveling companion, Mirza Taghi Khan, and, bidding good-bye to the other friends, traveled westward by rail through Caucasia to Tiflis and to Batum on the Black Sea. In Batum I spent three very pleasant days with Believers. Here I was joined by a young man from Te-

heran, whom I had met during my first visit to Khazvin, at which time he was on his way to Resht and Baku. We had hoped to meet at some point along the line of travel between Persia and Acre, for we were both bound for the Holy Land. Boarding a steamer we touched along the northern ports of Armenia, arriving at Constantinople at the end of four days.

While I was in Persia, the news reached us that a constitutional form of government had been declared in Turkey. Everywhere the Bahais were enthusiastic over this change, for they knew that, with the passing of the old regime of despotism, the troubles which had for so many years harassed our leader, Abdul-Baha, would be at an end. On arriving in Constantinople I found great changes taking place. My former visits there had given me a decided dislike for the place. The corruptness of all branches of the government made it impossible to transact any business without bribery. The general corruption of the country was apparent at every turn. This was particularly noticeable in the attitude and bearing of the people. Spied upon, maltreated, and oppressed, they were constrained, fearful, and suspicious. Now, however, all seemed quite different. The people were light-hearted and free, singing songs of liberty and praising the constitution. Newspapers and printed matter, hitherto subject to confiscation were free to all. There seemed to be an entire change in the very character and soul of the people. During our stay of

two days in Constantinople, we met freely with the Oriental Bahais there, they no longer fearing trouble, since the constitution gave the people religious freedom.

From Constantinople, my Persian friend and I took ship for Smyrna, where we made a brief stay, again sailing by a vessel which landed us in Beirut. The nearer we approached Acre, the more elated we found our friends. In Syria the changes brought about by the constitution seemed greater than those in Turkey, but probably this was only apparent to us because there we had more vital interests than at the capital. The officials, who had oppressed Abdul-Baha and his people, were no longer in power. Some had fled, barely escaping with their lives; others disappeared, while yet others were in prison. The oppressors had been dealt with as they had dealt with others.

The joy of the Bahais was a pleasure to see—especially that of the older men, who had survived years of hardship and oppression in The Cause. It was here in Beirut, that we first learned of Abdul-Baha's freedom, for, with the going into force of the constitution, all of the political prisoners throughout the realm were liberated, and just before our arrival in the country he had been officially notified of his freedom.

After a visit of four days with the friends in Beirut, we embarked for Haifa. On arrival there, instead of having to await for favorable conditions under which to enter Acre, as had always been necessary in the past, we drove

from the quay directly to the house of Abdul-Baha, where we were most graciously received. Although this was not my first visit to Acre, yet it was the first time that I had seen anything to mention of the city. I went about as a sight-seer. Wearing a tarboosh, with several Oriental friends, I even penetrated into the precincts of the mosque. On another occasion a number of us took a stroll over the plain of Acre, visiting the cemeteries near the city, where are the tombs of Abdul-Baha's mother, brother, and many of the original Bahai exiles who came to that country in captivity with Baha'o'llah.

One night Dr. Fareed took me to the pilgrims' house in Acre, where the Oriental friends are usually entertained. A long walk through dark streets, flanked with high buildings, and so narrow they seemed like crevices in the crust of the earth, brought us to an old caravanserai on the side of the city opposite to that where Abdul-Baha lived. In the upper part of this building, with windows and balconies overlooking the sea and Mount Carmel in the distance, are the rooms where the pilgrims are lodged and where several of the Bahai men live. Here we met Hadji Mirza Heyder Ali, who spent twelve years in exile for his faith in Khartoum, until freed when the English, under Gordon, entered the city. He is now well along in years and, though feeble in body, is spiritually young and active. When asked about his sufferings in The Cause, he was not very communicative,

but later on he told me some of his experiences.

Abdul-Baha was, as might have been expected, happy because of the freedom and liberty of the people. As for himself, personally, one did not feel that the change made very much difference one way or another. He seemed removed from the possibility of being hampered by calamity or uplifted by fortune.

Many people have asked me how Abdul-Baha impressed me. I should hardly use the word "impress" in connection with him. An impression is something which is imprinted upon one from without. His influence is not that of one personality upon another. Through contact with him the soul responds, is quickened and refreshed by his spirit of love, humility, service to humanity, and all other kindred virtues. This soul-quickening then produces its regenerating effect upon the character and soul of the individual working from within outward.

Each time I have gone to Acre I have naturally carried with me a conception or a mental picture of Abdul-Baha, and each time I have been obliged to lay this aside in order to find a larger and higher one. He has remained unchanged, while my vision has been a changing and growing one. Surely, if one were to go to him twenty times, each time he would appear different from the times before. It is, therefore, better not to cling to preconceived ideas, for unless these all be laid aside

the spirit cannot enter and evolve within us and shape us anew.

Abdul-Baha is a physician, who is healing the spiritual diseases of man. He sees and understands all conditions of the soul and gives to each just what that soul needs. His teaching is simplicity itself. The gospel of love he makes very real through living the life of God's servant among men. His words and explanations are so simple that oftentimes people may at first feel a pang of disappointment, when they may have expected abstruse theories and explanations, but, when they begin to realize the force of the spirit which characterizes Abdul-Baha's life, then they see the real power of his teaching, realizing how much greater is this than philosophizing.

Abdul-Baha teaches that it is through manifesting the joy and giving forth the love of The Kingdom that the Bahais will attract hungry souls and be able to lead them to The Kingdom. We should be fearless and enthusiastic as he is. We must not think of ourselves nor consider our feelings nor our welfare before that of serving the Lord. We should not be constrained, but manifest to all, frankly and freely, the love of God which we have in our hearts. The more of this love we give forth, the more of it will be ours to give. There should be no holding back: we must actively serve the Lord in every phase of life, for service is the necessary adjunct of belief and faith, for without works these latter are as naught.

Abdul-Baha's life is essentially one of service. His mission here is to teach us this. Only in following in his path of daily loving service to those about us will we become strong in spirit and fitted to act as stewards of the Lord. We must at all times increase actions, for our words when backed by spiritual actions will not lack force but will produce spiritual results in the souls of those who hear them.

Abdul-Baha sends his greeting and love to the Bahais in the West. In reply to a question regarding the House of Justice, he said that the House of Justice was not yet established; that for the present there were only local Bahai governing bodies, but that in time we would have a great central convocation composed of members from all parts of the world. This, the House of Justice, will convene at stated times. The function of the House of Justice, is purely administrative; it will, in the spirit of oneness and unity, pass and decide upon matters of moment in The Cause, its united action being acceptable before God. Abdul-Baha said that he himself was not under the House of Justice, yet he furthermore said that whatever the Believers agreed upon unanimously he would subscribe to, but this was because of his desire to promote harmony, not that he is subject to the followers.

The day that I left Acre for the West the friends had planned an out-of-door feast in the

garden of El-Rizwan, which is not far without the city. After parting with Abdul-Baha and receiving his blessing, D. Fareed and I drove to the tomb of Baha'o'llah, so sacred to his followers, which is at Behji, near Acre. Entering the court of the tomb, we remained for some moments, while a tablet was chanted; then, entering the tomb chamber, we knelt in silent prayer.

From Behji we drove to the garden of El-Rizwan, where a large number of the Bahais of the vicinity were assembled. After taking tea and other light refreshments with these friends, seated under the mulberry trees on the terrace beside the river, where Bala'o'llah spent so much time, we had a parting word, a prayer chanted, and many good-byes. Here I left the young man from Teheran, who had been my traveling companion for the three weeks past. He had indeed been a friend and devotion itself, and here I learned another lesson not taught by word but through example.

Laden with messages of love and greeting to the friends in the West, I started for Haifa, where I arrived just in time to catch an evening steamer for Port Said. From Port Said I went on to Paris, via Messina and Marseilles, where I spent five days with the Believers. Here I met with our well-known friend, M. Ahmed Yazdi, of Port Said, with whom I went to London, where we spent five days with the friends before going to Oxford, where Mrs. Stannard and Miss Rosenberg, both of the London Assembly, were attending a congress

for the comparative study of religion. Miss Rosenberg represented the Bahai movement at this convocation with a paper which was well received.

Parting with M. Yazdi, and sailing from Liverpool, I landed in Quebec, and after brief visits with the Bahais in Montreal and New York found myself back again in Washington after an absence of almost six months.

The Persian Bahais have those very elements of spiritual virtue which we in this country need. There is a devotion and a fraternity amongst them which is most beautiful. This is needed in the West. During my trip through the East, I had such a wealth of devotion and brotherly affection poured out upon me that I could actually see and feel its effect. It had refreshed my very soul and quite changed my attitude toward people in general.

This spirit of Bahai love, so intense in Persia, softens and strengthens one's nature. It makes the strong stronger, the weak more firm and steadfast, and it refines man and makes him more susceptible and penetrable to the good and less susceptible and impenetrable to evil. It gives the believer the power to enter into the lives of others and to impart to them the desire to know the truth and the power to arise in service. This is that which we all need in greater abundance, is that which Abdul-Baha is giving to us, and it is that which we must attain through following in his path of service to God and mankind.

FINIS.

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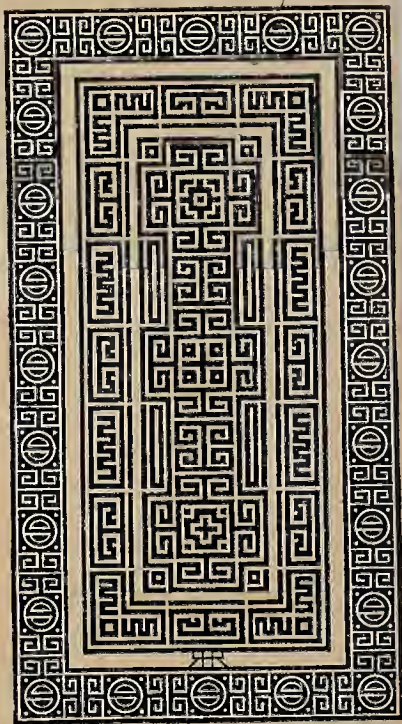
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Bahai Movement

A Universal Religion

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THE BAHAI MOVEMENT

"PRAISE be to God that the divine cause in this Bahai dispensation is one of absolute love and of pure spirituality. It is not a worldly kingdom, for it is not war and distress, nor the oppression of one people by another. Its army is the love of God, its victory is the ecstasy of the knowledge of God; its battle is that of Truth, the exposition of the Word; its warfare is against selfishness; its patience is its reserve; its entire meekness is its conquering power, and its love for all is a glory for evermore. In a word it is spirit and it is love."

"It is for us to consider how we may educate men that the darkness of ignorance and heedlessness may disappear and that the radiance of the kingdom may encompass the world; that the nations of men may be delivered from selfish ambition and strife, and be revived by the fragrance of God; that animosity and hatred may be dispersed and wholly disappear, while the attracting power of the love of God so completely unites the hearts of men, that all hearts beat as a single heart; that the arteries of all mankind may pulsate with the love of God; that contention and war may utterly pass away, while peace and reconciliation lift their standard in the midst of the earth and men become enamoured of one another; that the joys of spirituality may prevail over material pleasures; that East and West may delight in one another as lovers, and North and South embrace each other in closest affection; that the visible world may be the mirror of the world of the kingdom; that the image of the supreme

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concourse may be reflected in all gatherings of men; that the earth may be changed into the paradise of the Glorious One, and the Divine Jerusalem embrace the terrestrial globe."

THESE are the words of a great teacher, a Persian by birth, an exile from his country, and a prisoner of the Turkish Government in the little fortress town of Acre or Akka, at the foot of Mount Carmel, on the coast of Syria; a man who for over forty years has been persecuted and rejected, and endured the sufferings and privations of a prisoner's life, and yet these triumphant words, sounding a note of peace and joy, have recently fallen from his lips. Have they no significance for the Western world? Let us see if the life and teaching of this man now living but a few miles distant from Nazareth itself, and which are having such a stimulating effect throughout the Oriental world, may not be suggestive to the nations of the West. This teacher, in fact, is making his appeal for religious unity not only to the people of the East, but also to the people of the West, and is there not as much need in the West as in the East, for religious unity? It is said to-day that in the West, there is more animosity and bitterness of feeling existing between the various churches than ever before. How are such divisions to be healed?

Let us turn to India for a moment, and see what this Bahai Movement has accomplished in a very short time. When I visited the city of Rangoon a year ago, I attended a Bahai meeting, at which representatives of six of the great world religions were assembled together, united by a wonderful bond of friendship and unity. This gathering was composed chiefly of men of mature age, doctors, lawyers, government employes and others, who had been brought up as strict Mohammedans, Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Zoroastrians and Christians, yet here they were conferring together.

If this Bahai spirit of love and tolerance as taught by the "Master of Akka," can penetrate to India and draw together men of hostile faiths, may it not also shed its benign influence over the people of the West? But it is not necessary

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to go to India to see what the Bahai Movement has accomplished. In fact in the city of Paris it has already been uniting Catholics, Protestants, Freethinkers and Jews, and in other cities in Europe as well as in the United States and Canada, the movement has been making its influence felt and has attracted many to it.

The Bahai Movement claims to be the divine instrument for bringing religious unity into the world; and for this reason, if for no other, it deserves attention. Its claim is too vital and important to be set aside; the long roll of its martyrs; the wonderful lives of its founders; its regenerating influence in Persia; the fact that people of nearly every race, creed and sect have been attracted to it, and finally, its progress in the western world, all these things compel, if not admiration, at least interest. The birth of a great religious movement is not a thing to be ignored. Who could have imagined in the early days of Christianity, when it was teaching with great force and beauty the vital doctrine of love and unity,—now so much lost sight of,—that a few centuries later it would so powerfully affect the world. In our study of the Bahai Movement we shall find many striking points of similarity between it and the early movement of the Christian faith.

All great religious movements have been founded by some great personelity, who has a divine message to deliver, and who succeeds in so changing and renewing the lives of men that they become saints and martyrs, and their blood becomes in truth "the seed of the church."

Let me set forth as briefly as possible some of the characteristics of this new religious movement known as the Bahai Revelation, and what it has accomplished, and is still accomplishing in the world to-day, together with some account of its present leader Abdul Baha (Abbas Effendi), the man and his message.

In order to understand Abbas Effendi's position in regard to this movement, I must direct you to the great founder of this religion, Baha Ullah, and his forerunner, the Bab. At the mention of the name of the Bab, there may be some who will imagine that Babism and the Bahai Faith are one and the same. But the latter is an out-growth of the former,

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and differs from it essentially on many points, as one may easily discover, either by studying the early history of Babism and comparing it with the present movement known as the Bahai Revelation, or by reading the early writings of the Bab and comparing them with those of Baha-Ullah, from whom the present movement takes its name.

While comparing the two, we can notice the striking analogy that we have in New Testament history. We find the religious movement inaugurated by John the Baptist, differing materially from that begun by Jesus. Although John the Baptist evidently taught doctrines and a certain mode of living to his disciples, yet his only claim was that of a voice crying in the wilderness, preparing the way for one who was to be preferred before him. So it was with the young Persian Bab, who gave to his followers certain forms and doctrines, and some rules drawn up in a book known as the "Bayan," but at the same time he continually proclaimed that he was but the Herald of one greater, who should come after him, and he told his disciples to be in constant expectation of "Him, whom God shall manifest."

The Bab had indeed inaugurated a great reform, but his movement remained more or less Persian and Mohammedan; and one feels that it could never have become universal. It remained for Baha Ullah, who came after the Bab, to give this movement its truly broad, catholic and universal spirit which it possesses to-day.

As a further elucidation, I will give a brief sketch of the movement from its beginning.

In the year 1844 of our era, which corresponds to the year 1260 in the Mohammedan calendar, there appeared in Persia a youth, Mirza Ali Mohamed by name, who called himself the Bab, that is the door or gate through which men could arrive at the knowledge of Truth or God.

The Bab began his mission as a Door by opening the people's minds to the real truths of their own religion, and he, like all great prophets, did not come to destroy but to fulfil, he did not tell his Mohammedan hearers that they had been deluded all these years by a false prophet, but he did, however, rate them soundly—as Jesus did the Pharisees—for their hypocrisy and their distortion of true religion. He

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also explained to them the true meaning of their prophecies and traditions that a Mahdi should come. To quote his own words, "in the past whenever there was need, God raised up a prophet on the earth bearing a book containing a divine revelation, and he will do the same in the future whenever there is need."

The words of the Bab were naturally met with jeers and derision by the Mohammedan pharisees, and he had to endure insult and persecution culminating in his imprisonment and death. He was shot by order of the Persian government, in a public square in Tabriz.

The life of the young reformer was not sacrificed in vain; during his life-time great numbers of earnest men and women had allied themselves to his cause and had been diligent in spreading his teachings throughout Persia, so that soon the movement had grown to such an extent that the Persian government and the Mullas became alarmed, thinking it a serious menace to the supremacy of Islam, and believing that the movement must have some political as well as religious meaning. Orders were given to plunder and persecute the followers of the Bab, and during these dark years many thousands gave up their lives and endured the worst of tortures for their Faith. Here we find a record of heroic devotion, bravery and self-sacrifice which, as Professor E. G. Browne, of Cambridge, says, may perhaps be paralleled in history but cannot be surpassed. T. H. Huxley, Ernest Renan, and the Comte de Gobineau have also written in terms of the greatest admiration of these Persian martyrs, whom they can only compare to the early martyrs of the Christian Faith. One is tempted to dwell on these stirring events of the early days of the movement, but space does not permit more than a passing allusion to them. No account, however, should be given without at least mentioning the name of Kurratui-Ayn, that remarkable heroine who has been called the Joan of Arc of her country and age. She was the daughter of one of the leading Ullemas of Islam, a woman of culture and position, known as a poetess, philosopher, linguist and theologian; she early became a convert to the new movement, and, leaving her home, travelled about Persia, speaking publicly, and, it is said, converting many

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to the new Faith. Finally she was seized by the scandalized Mohammedans and cruelly martyred. This saintly woman by her great courage has led the way for her sisters in the Orient; and a new era for women has commenced, for both the Bab and Baha Ullah preached the emancipation of women. Under this teaching woman assumes her rightful position as the equal of man.

The Bab had left behind him a beautiful hope as a legacy to his followers, namely, that "He whom God shall manifest," should arrive and complete what he had only imperfectly begun.

For several years after the death of the Bab in 1850, the movement seemed in a very precarious condition; it had a bad reputation with the Persian government; it was looked down upon with contempt by nearly all the Persians of wealth and position; its followers could only meet together secretly, and no one dared to breathe the hated name of "Babi,"; indeed it seemed for a time as though the Mullas had succeeded in crushing out the young Faith entirely. There was the greatest need for the coming of the Promised One to save the movement from extinction, to restore the zeal and courage of the persecuted Babis. They were not to be disappointed in their hope, for, during the early sixties, there arose one whose grand personality, wonderful powers of utterance, and inspired writings, proclaimed him to be the Manifestation for which the Babis were waiting, and indeed when Baba Ullah publicly proclaimed that he was the Promised One, whose advent the Bab had foretold, the great majority of the Babis hailed him with joy as their Lord and Redeemer. There were, it is true, a few dissenting voices, even in the Baba Ullah's own family, who were content with the doctrines of the Bab, and who did not wish to go beyond these. These grouped themselves around Subh-i-Ezoi, but he never had many followers, and few of them now survive, so that their refusal to accept the teachings of Baba Ullah can hardly be called by the name of schism. The movement has outlived this little trouble, and another and more recent one, but its unity has been unimpaired, and it has emerged triumphant from these trials, showing to the world that it can preserve within itself the unity which it teaches.

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Baha Ullah (the Glory of God) was born in 1817, and came of a wealthy and noble family. As a young man he became a follower of the Bab, although he had never seen him. His prominence as a teacher of the New Faith led to his imprisonment in Teheran. For some time he was kept in chains, together with several others, until finally his wealth was confiscated and he was exiled to the city of Baghdad in the Sultan of Turkey's dominions. While there he continued to teach the people, and his influence over them became very great. During two years he withdrew himself to the mountains near Baghdad, and lived apart from men, passing his time in prayer and meditation. On his return he publicly proclaimed his mission, which was that of establishing peace and religious unity in the world. He called to men, of every creed and race to come under the standard of Unity, which he had upraised, and assist him in establishing the Kingdom of God and the Brotherhood of man upon the earth. The Mohammedan Mullahs of Baghdad soon became alarmed at having a man of such influence and power in their midst, and petitioned the Ottoman government to have him removed. Baha Ullah was accordingly summoned to appear in Constantinople, and, together with his family and a little group of followers, he set out for that city. His stay in Constantinople was short, for the Turkish government decided to banish him to the city of Adrianople. From Adrianople Baha Ullah wrote those famous letters (sent later from Akka) to the Kings of Europe and the Pope, calling upon them to abandon their injustice, their thoughts of warfare, and to assist in establishing Unity. The letters also contained prophetic utterances which were soon after fulfilled. After a few years spent in Adrianople, he was again banished to a still more inaccessible spot, the little fortress town of Acre or Akka on the coast of Syria. Here Baha Ullah and his little band of followers passed some of the most terrible years of their exile, for Acre can only be described as pestilential, and it seems probable that Baha Ullah was sent there in the hopes that a fever would soon rid the world of him. For some time he and his followers were confined to two rooms in the barracks, but gradually

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more leniency was shown them, the heart of the governor becoming softened at witnessing the heroic sufferings of the little band. Baha Ullah spent most of his time in Acre in teaching those few followers who could hold communication with him* ; in writing his instructions and admonitions to the world ; in sending tablets to followers in different parts, and in writing a book known as

THE BOOK OF LAWS.

In this book Baha Ullah tells his followers that the sword must for ever be put away ; in its place the Word must arise. He proclaims Universal Peace and calls upon the nations to settle their differences by a board of arbitration ; he pleads for a broad spirit of friendship and tolerance to be shown to all the peoples of the earth ; "ye are all the fruits of one tree," as he beautifully expresses it ; he enjoins his followers to seek for a universal language ; he says, "this is the means of union, if ye knew it, and the greatest source of concord and civilization, did ye recognise it. Teach this common language to the children in all schools, that the whole world may become one land and one home" ; he tells parents that they must educate their children, boy and girl alike, giving them the best education they can afford, and that the poor must be educated by a board of Councillors to be elected in each city, for he considers that until ignorance is uprooted there can be no true progress ; and he wishes so to impress on his followers the value of education, that he says, "he who educates his own son or the son of another, it is as though he educated the Son of God." All must learn and practice some craft, trade or profession, which if practised conscientiously and diligently, will be considered as the highest act of prayer and worship toward God. There are no priests connected with this religion and

* There has just been added to the little Penny Series "Hidden Words, from the Arabic," written by Baha Ullah.

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those who teach this Faith should not receive any pay but support themselves by other means. The acquisition of science and art is commended. Marriage is advised, and celibacy and asceticism condemned. Baha Ullah wishes his religion to be one of joy and gladness. He tells his followers to associate with all the people of the world, and to show forth to others whatever good things they possess, in a word to be in the world, but not of it. He strongly condemns gambling, the use of opium, intemperance and other vices, and he lays down some interesting hygienic laws. A law is given, advocating kindness to animals, and beasts of burden are not to be ill-treated or overloaded. Baha Ullah submits this "Book of Laws," as a standard rule of conduct, and a great means of uniting the various peoples so separated by different customs, prejudices, and habits. We cannot but admire the remarkably modern and tolerant spirit that animates these laws. All the things that Western reformers are striving for to-day, find a place in his universal religion, and yet these laws were written by Baha Ullah over forty years ago, while confined in an Eastern prison.

In the following lines Baha Ullah tells his followers how religion should be taught to the world. "O Children of Baha associate with all the people of the world, with men of all religions, in concord and harmony, in the spirit of perfect joy and fragrance. Remind them also of that which is for the benefit of all, but beware lest ye make the Word of God the cause of opposition and stumbling, or the source of hatred among you. If ye have a word or an essence which another has not, say it to him with the tongue of love and kindness. If it be accepted and impressed the end is attained, if not leave him to himself and pray for him, but do not molest him. The tongue of kindness is attractive to the heart and it is the sword of the spirit; it furnishes the true relation of thought to utterance; it is as the horizon for the arising of the sun of Wisdom and Knowledge. . . . Creatures were created through love, let them live in friendship and unity."

Now the question arises, do his followers, the Bahais, carry out these laws, are they animated by the same spirit of tolerance and goodwill that breathes through these in-

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structions? I can but give my personal testimony of the lives and practices of the Babais, as I have seen them in various parts of the Orient, together with the testimony of other men, an Englishman, an American, and a Frenchman.

Professor Browne, the author of the invaluable "History of Persian Literature," says, "The spirit which pervades the Bahais is such that it can hardly fail to affect most powerfully all subjected to its influence. Let those who have not seen disbelieve me if they will, but should that spirit once reveal itself to them they will experience an emotion they are not likely to forget."

Myron H. Phelps of New York writes, "If we analyse this spirit which pervades the Bahais, if we seek to penetrate that which marks them off from other men, the conclusion to which we are brought is that its essence is expressed in the one word Love. These men are lovers, lovers of God, of their Master and Teacher, of each other, and of all mankind."

M. Hippolyte Dreyfus of Paris, who has recently returned from Persia, writes in a French review, that "he found among the inhabitants of Teheran and other cities all those imbued with liberal and progressive views were Bahais."

Finally let me speak of those Bahais who are subjects of the British Empire, the Indian and Burmese Bahais, whom I came to know well during a recent stay in India. Every serious-minded person who visits India and is a well-wisher of that glorious country, must regret the unhappy differences that separate Indian from Indian, due chiefly to religious animosity. How one longs for a solution of this vexed problem. If only some broad faith could be found to include all the wrangling and hostile sects and creeds! Now I believe most earnestly that the solution of this difficulty lies in the Bahai Movement. I have already pointed out by an example taken from Rangoon, that it has brought about this very Unity which all are desiring. How has it been able to do this?

The first command that is given to a Bahai by his Leader is this: "Do not antagonise or denounce any religion," he also says that "God is to every human being as great as the individual mental capacity permits one to see him." The

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Bahai propagandist in India has not the difficulty that besets a Christian missionary, that of pulling down; his duty is only to build on to what is already there, for the Bahai teaches that the essence and truths of all religions are one; he sees the Hindu, Buddhist and Mohammedan with the same eye, and he reverences the prophets of each; instead of showing where they were wrong, he shows where they were right; he acknowledges the common truth in Buddhism, Mohammedanism, Christianity, and other great religions; he shows their adherents that a further revelation has come through the teaching of Baha Ullah; that its particular mission is to uncover the truth of all religion by removing prejudice and ignorance from the minds of the people, and by uniting them in thought, faith and love. The Bahai does not disdain the prophecies which have come down to us from all religions, but points out that they have all referred to the coming of a great teacher who should establish peace and harmony on the earth.

Let me say here a word about prophecy. There are many, I know, who take no interest in the subject whatever, but we must remember that prophecies exist in every religion, and they have to be reckoned with. If we are considering a universal movement to consist only of a few cultured minds, then we may perhaps dismiss prophecy altogether, but we are not; we are thinking of millions of Christians, Buddhists, Mohammedans and others, who all believe in prophecy. Unless a movement can fulfil the prophecies and expectations of these various peoples, it cannot succeed in being universal, it will only become another sect. The fact that the Bahai Faith does fulfil the prophecies of the different religions, is one of the greatest arguments in favour of its universality. Another factor in the spreading of the Bahai Religion in the East, is the marvellous spirit already referred to, which animates the Bahais, and is shown in their self-sacrificing lives.

One of the reasons why Christianity has failed to become the predominant religion in the East, is because of the prejudice against it, due to the misrepresentation of its true spirit. In a recent article by Professor Browne, he says,

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"I have often heard wonder expressed by Christian ministers at the extraordinary success of Bahai missionaries, as contrasted with the almost complete failure of their own. 'How is it,' they say, 'that the Christian Doctrine, the highest and noblest which the world has ever known, though supported by all the resources of Western civilisation, can only count its converts in Mohammedan lands by twos and threes, while Bahaism can reckon them by thousands?' The answer to my mind is as plain as the sun at mid-day. Western Christianity, save in the rarest cases, is more Western than Christian, more racial than religious; and, by dallying with doctrines plainly incompatible with the obvious meaning of its Founder's words, such as the theories of 'racial supremacy,' 'imperial destiny,' 'survival of the fittest,' and the like, grows steadily more, rather than less, material. Did Christ belong to a 'dominant race,' or even to a European or 'white' race? . . . The dark-skinned races to whom the Christian missionaries go are not fools, and have no object in practising that curious self-deception wherewith so many excellent and well-meaning European and American Christians blind themselves to the obvious fact that they attach much more importance to race than to religion; they clearly see the inconsistency of those who, while professing to believe that the God they worship incarnated Himself in the form of an Asiatic man—for this is what it comes to—do nevertheless habitually and almost instinctively express, both in speech and action, contempt for the 'natives' of Asia."

I do not wish to enter into a controversy regarding the merits or demerits of the missionaries in the Orient, preferring simply to offer my tribute to some of those earnest and self-sacrificing ones whom I know, but I wonder how many of them really believe that there is a probability or a possibility of the many hundred millions of Mohammedans and others becoming Christians. Those who have lived in the East know that it is as rare for a Mohammedan to become a Christian, as it is for a Christian in the West to become a Mohammedan. We must remember too, that the Mohammedans and others believe just as firmly as the Christians, that their religion will become predominant, but

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history itself gives the refutation to this belief. Take for instance the two great religions of Christianity and Mohammedanism. Can we say that, after all the zeal, the earnestness, the effort with which their adherents have tried to convert each other, they are any nearer being united than they were thirteen centuries ago? And among the millions of Buddhists in the world do we notice any perceptible difference of numbers caused by their defection into other religions? And Buddhists also are making converts, so it is nothing but a continual exchange without approaching any nearer to unity.

The present situation might be likened to a pyramid, one side being given to the Christians, another to the Buddhists, another to the Mohammedans, and another to the Hindus. Each one is trying to draw his neighbour over to his side of the pyramid. If instead of looking *around*, they would look *up* to the apex, they would behold the Light which they all are seeking.

The great barrier separating Christians, Mohammedans, Buddhists, and others, is at length being broken down through the influence of this Bahai Movement, and a friendly, even a fraternal relationship is being established among them. There are not merely a few dozens so affected, but many thousands. May we not say then that perhaps the true spirit of Christianity is in this movement? We have but the words of the Christ, "Ye cannot gather figs from thistles," and "by their fruits ye shall know them."

I have written a short account of the Bahais in India, in a book entitled, "With the Bahais in India," and from this I shall quote an incident which happened while I was in Bombay. I have mentioned that Baha Ullah, in his "Book of Laws," advised that a council should be elected in each Bahai community to look after the affairs of that community. In Bombay they have such a council composed of nineteen persons, chiefly Mohammedans and Zoroastrians. These two peoples were anything but friendly in the past, but now they are working together harmoniously for the common good. One night, while I was attending a meeting of this council, a poor Zoroastrian Bahai shopkeeper

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came and told the members that affairs had been going very badly with him, and that he was on the point of failure. The council deliberated, and decided that different members should give a part of their time each day to helping him in his shop, lay in a new stock of goods and give pecuniary help if necessary. This was done, and soon the man was on his feet again. This is an example to show that the Bahais practice the fraternity which they preach.

A Mohammedan Bahai also arrived that evening in a state of much perplexity. He had just received from a Mohammedan friend a hundred lottery tickets to dispose of, the lottery being for some Mohammedan charity. "I don't know what to do with them," the man said. "In the Book of Laws, Baha Ullah has strongly forbidden gambling, but I am not sure whether a lottery would come under the head of gambling or not. If I accept and distribute these lottery tickets I may be breaking one of the laws, on the other hand, if I refuse them, I shall probably make this friend of mine, who is an influential Mohammedan, my bitter enemy." The nineteen members of the House of Justice, as the assembly is called, deliberated together as to what should be done. Finally, a Zoroastrian member saw a way out of the difficulty, and he proposed that each one of the Bahais should take a ticket, and then return them with the hundred rupees, writing that they did not care to take a chance in a lottery, but they were very glad to help a Mohammedan charity. I wonder if all who read these lines will appreciate the beauty and the greatness of this act. It shows two great results of Bahai teaching—gambling, one of the most prevalent vices of the East, being looked upon with aversion; and the feeling of animosity and hatred of Zoroastrian for Mohammedan, which has endured for centuries, becoming so modified, that they are glad to help a Mohammedan charity. Truly this is no small fruit from the Bahai tree. I wish it were possible to speak here of many other cases of noble and disinterested examples of service for the common good, which came under my notice in India.

This spirit of love and service to fellow men was exemplified in an Indian Bahai actually giving his life, on one

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occasion, to save mine, and "greater love hath no man than this."

"Think," a Persian Bahai once said to me, "when I was an orthodox Mohammedan, I used to wash my hands after shaking hands with a Christian, thinking myself polluted, now I want to shake hands with all the world."

Baha Ullah had been exiled from his country in 1852, and after forty years of exile, wandering, and imprisonment, his earthly ministry came to an end.

He left word to his disciples that after his departure, they should look to his eldest son, Abbas Effendi, as their leader and teacher, the one on whose shoulders his mantle was to fall, the exponent and promulgator of his teachings to the world. Since 1892, Abbas Effendi, who, thereafter, assumed the title Abdul Baha, the servant of God, has been the leader of the Bahai Movement, and under his wise and loving guidance it has grown and expanded, until its influence has been felt in the four corners of the earth. I saw a striking example of this when I visited Acre some two years ago, and met men—from India, Burmah, Persia, Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Russia, France, England and America— assembled there, to listen to the teachings of the Master, the name by which Abdul Baha is universally called. These men, belonging to various races, creeds, and sects, were gathered around one table breaking bread together, and greeting each other as friends and brothers. Can such a scene be paralleled in any other spot on earth?

Abdul Baha is more than a teacher, he is a living example to men of what the Christ-life really is; love and kindness seem to radiate from him and his daily life is an expression of service to man. He is showing to the materialistic and sceptical twentieth century, that this life is not merely an ideal, but a possibility, that we may take heart again and "turn our sight to ourselves to find God standing within us, powerful, mighty and supreme" (Baha Ullah); and that we may come into the sonship of the Kingdom of God.

There have been some who have denied that such a personality as Jesus could have lived upon the earth. The life of Abdul Baha proves the actuality of Jesus. The true

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Bahai is also the truest Christian, he no longer speculates as to whether it was possible that so perfect a being could have trod the earth nineteen centuries ago; he looks at the life of the "Master of Akka," and knows. Such a life is an inspiration to the whole race. It is a greater argument for the love of God and the truth of religion than all the books of theology (old or new) ever written. Men have grown tired of theories and speculations, they want to hear again that note of love, unselfishness and brotherhood, that was heard nineteen hundred years ago. Such a note is again being sounded from that same Holy Land to-day, by the servant of God, Abdul Baha, who is teaching the world the forgotten truths, and preaching the true atonement, the at-one-ment of man with man, and man with God, revealing the true love, which is another word for service, the giving of oneself for the whole. He is teaching the lesson of oneness. No doctrines are so magnified by him that their non-acceptance would shut any soul out of the Kingdom. "All else save love," he says, "is merely outwardly uttered words"; again he says, "this is a religion of deeds, not words." He is calling to men and women of every race and creed to come under the standard of Unity, which he is bearing aloft, to assist him in establishing the Kingdom of God, the Brotherhood of man on the earth here and now. Let those who are really desiring the reign of peace and goodwill to man, and not simply the triumph of their own particular sect or creed, or of their own set of opinions, listen to the appeal of this man who calls us to unity. Can we find anywhere to-day a greater instrument for bringing about this Unity and Brotherhood of man which we profess to desire, than in this Bahai Movement? It is giving to men, what some writer has said, is the best thing that any religion can give to man,—a *new heart*. It is uniting men in the only way they can be united, through love, understanding and service.

It will be thus seen that the message of the Bahai Movement is one of peace to the world, and that the Bahais consider this Manifestation as but another outpouring of Divine Truth upon the earth; that they are lovers of the Light from whatever horizon it may appear, considering the

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different prophets and divine teachers of the past as lamps through which this Light shone forth and by which the world has been enlightened; therefore it considers all religions to be divine and possessing the essence of Truth which has since become obscured by the superstitions and different practices which have been added by man.

Considering the power of assimilation that the Bahai Religion has shown, its rapid growth amongst so many different races and religions, and the bond of real sympathy, affection and understanding which it is creating between East and West, may we not say that its claim to be a universal religion is not merely a beautiful ideal, but a growing reality?

What earnest observer of life can deny that the world is passing through a great upheaval of thought. The old order of things is passing away, whether we wish it or no, men are everywhere seeking for truth, and people are being tossed about by every wind of doctrine. Such is the significance of the Higher Criticism, the New Theology, the springing up of so many societies and sects, the fact that many in Protestant lands are turning towards Catholicism, and that many in Catholic lands are becoming Protestants or Free-thinkers. This is what is happening under Christian governments, but the same upheaval is occurring in other countries. What is to be the outcome of it all? There are many who recoil from the cold and unsympathetic systems of ethics put forward by certain materialists, and who at the same time are repulsed by the extremes to which certain occultists go. They feel the need of a religion, and yet the message of the churches is no longer vital to them. It is to such people that the Bahai Movement especially appeals. A religion which exalts work, education, science, and peace, should appeal to the Positivist, the Ethicist and the social reformer, and while upholding all the great social reforms, never loses grasp of the Eternal Realities. It contains that spiritual force, that vital faith, which is necessary to put these reforms into execution.

Such a religion wholly divorced from a spirit of com-

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mercialism, and whose only warfare is against selfishness, must appeal to all that is highest and best in man.

"O people of the world! The creed of God is for love and union, make it not to be a cause of discord and dissension. I enjoin you to the service of the nations and to the pacification of the world.

"O people of the world! The pavilion of Unity is raised, do not gaze upon each other with the eyes of foreigners, ye are all the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch.

"Let him not glory who loves his own country, but let him glory who loves the whole world."—(Words of BAHÁ-ULLÁH.)



Table Talks

With ABDUL-BAHA

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in February, 1904

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DIFFERENT UNITING POWERS.

The existent world needs a uniting power to connect nations. There are various uniting powers in the world. One is patriotism, as in America, where people from different countries have united and made a nation. Another means of union is war, as when two nations unite to make war upon a third. A third uniting power is self-benefit, as is seen in trade and commerce. A fourth means of union is that furnished by ideals, different nations or different peoples having one aim or intention unite. All these uniting powers are ineffective and perishable; the only uniting power which can connect all hearts and last forever is faith in God and love for Him. This is the only enduring power, the one that never perishes.

Consider our present state and the condition of the disciples of Jesus Christ: When we remember them we are touched and moved by their love; when we think of Abraham we are

touched by his love; it is this power of love that connects us with Abraham of old, with the past.

I hope that the connecting power of love of the Kingdom of God will unite all the nations of the world. This is Our hope.

Once the Persian believers had such great love for one another that each wished the other to take possession of his wealth.

CHANGE IN SEASONS.

Whatever there is in the world of contingency is a symbol of the spiritual world; whatever there is on the earth is a symbol of heavenly things. For example: In the spiritual world there is the light of guidance, in the outer world there is the lamp, its symbol. In the divine world there is love, symbolized in the material world by magnetism. So there are four seasons in the perishable, outer world—spring, which brings the vegetables, refreshes the animals, and promises fruits; summer, which charges the trees with fruits; then follows, the autumn, after which comes the winter, when the trees are bare and empty. Such is the condition of the spiritual world, which has its four seasons—spring, summer, autumn, and winter.

When Jesus Christ appeared, it was the last days of the winter time, when the people, who are the trees of the divine garden, were deprived of their fruits; that is, of their divine

characteristics and divine moralities. As nature needs a springtime to revive the trees, so the spiritual nature needs a springtime to fill the garden with flowers and fruits. It was through the manifestation of Jesus Christ that this spiritual springtime began. Summer followed with its fruits and, later, autumn came. Winter followed and the trees were naked; that is, the people were without their divine qualities. So again, it became necessary that a new springtime should come.

Today, people know of Jesus Christ His name, His name without His realities or His qualities. Knowing only the name of the Lamp, they repeat it constantly, utterly unaware of the use of the Lamp, and that it should give light.

In olden times there was a hero, a valorous man, whose history is always being told in the public-houses and in the coffee-rooms of Egypt. People who are in the habit of gathering in these places repeat the history of this hero, telling how courageous he was. While they were spending their time in this way, praising their old hero, the English took their country in ten moments.

STRAY THOUGHTS AT THE DINNER TABLE.

TRANQUILITY.—When the spirit is tranquil the body is at ease.

LIGHT.—It does not matter for the light

whether the crystal is pure or not, but it is better that both be pure, the light and the crystal. The crystal may become broken, but the light will still exist.

TEACHING.—All teaching and knowledge are enclosed in the soul of man, because his soul encompasses everything. To study means to try to bring them to light. For instance: The flowers, fruits, and leaves are contained in the seed; and with the heat, light, and soil, the fruits are manifested. The figure is contained in the mirror, but the mirror of itself has not the power to reflect it. Polishing is necessary in order to give out a perfect reflection. Even on this wall there exists the possibility of a reflection, but it needs polishing to bring out the reflection. So study is polishing.

There are many people in Persia who are illiterate, but who are able to guide wise and learned men. Knowledge and sciences are like water gathered from pools and cisterns for the irrigation of the soil; the confirmations of God are like rainfalls and showers. Why should one gather water from pools when the pure water is obtainable? Unless one's mind be concentrated on the Cause, one can not receive assistance from God.

BEGINNINGS OF BELIEF.

The first entrance into light and into belief is extremely difficult. The spiritual birth is

troublesome and painful in the same degree as is the physical birth. In reality, the two births are alike. In the beginning it is very difficult to enter into the kingdom, but after being there a short time existence becomes delightful; just as the babe, after he has been brought into the world and has begun to receive the blessings and pleasures of his material life, is happy to have been born. Looking back at his previous condition, the child realizes how dark and gloomy was the world from which he came when he was brought into the luminous world. This is also the condition of the one who has received the spiritual light, who has entered into the spiritual world and been convinced. Looking backward, he sees in what a gloomy world he formerly existed, and he realizes into what a brilliant world he has been brought.

When a spiritual birth has taken place, the condition of the newly born in the spirit is like that of the babe newly born from the womb. The child is very easily attracted to an object, and he very quickly becomes attached to it; nevertheless, he rejects it readily, and hates easily what he had at first liked. Judas Iscariot, like a child, easily accepted the cause of Christ; but he also rejected it easily, in the same way that the child's attention is readily drawn to an object and lightly diverted from it. Moreover, a child readily becomes attached to nonsensical, worldly things; in the same way Judas Iscariot was cheated with

the world. When, on the contrary, man reaches his maturity, his love is deepened and made firm. Peter was one who reached his maturity; really firm in his love he was not cheated by the world.

It is in this way that believers who have entered this Cause must perfect themselves and try to reach their maturity. Otherwise, with only a slight temptation they fail, they waver, they become separated from the Cause. The only means of reaching this station of maturity are to fulfil the commandments and to try to obtain divine qualities and spiritual moralities.

The BLESSED PERFECTION likened man to a candlestick or a lamp; and belief, with the confirmation of God, to the light within that lamp. The lamp should have a shining light. It was in this sense that Christ said that the tree should be known by its fruits. We can judge the believers by their deeds.

(Turning to us Abdul-Baha said:)

So we hope that on your return you will be radiant and shining with the light of the Kingdom. You must be surrounded by such a light that all may perceive it; you must be so filled with the light that every one will bear record to your brilliancy. The sweet odor of these fragrant blossoms (indicating the narcissus blossoms on the table) cannot be concealed. If some people have colds and can not smell the sweet perfumes of the flowers, there are always others who can appreciate them.

PLEASURES OF THIS WORLD.

There is no real pleasure in the world and no real happiness. All the earthly pleasures and material enjoyments are but alleviations of pains and an appeasement of troubles. For instance: A man feels hunger and is in trouble; food can appease this trouble, and he thinks and calls this taking away of his hunger a pleasure. Or, again, one suffers with thirst, and a drink of pure water relieves his sufferings; this relief he calls a pleasure, but, in truth, it is not a pleasure at all. Or a man, having labored all the day long, feels very weary and tired; a little repose removes his weariness, and this seems to him a pleasure. Yet, in truth, none of these enjoyments are real ones, because to him who is not hungry or thirsty food and water can give no pleasure; he who is not tired can derive no pleasure from sleep; he who has slept enough would never like to sleep again, and the sleep would be to him a trouble instead of a pleasure.

As we see, there is no pleasure in the fore-mentioned things. So one morsel of bread can satisfy a man and give as much satisfaction as the most varied foods; when one would sleep, a single, simple room can give benefit equal to that of the most gorgeous palace. Being sure then, that there is no real pleasure in the material world, we must seek for the spiritual happiness which is everlasting.

Love is a spiritual happiness; it is not an alleviating pleasure, and man can never hate it. Knowledge is a spiritual pleasure, and man is never satiated with it. Faithfulness and fidelity are divine and spiritual enjoyments; one who tastes these pleasures can never have too much of them nor become disgusted with them.

(Today Abdul-Baha said many things about the pleasure of being detached from the world. Among them He said:) I wish for the happiness and prosperity of the believers even in this material world, but they must not be attracted by it or attached to it. Extreme wealth or utter poverty should be equal to them.

MERCY OF THE DIVINE BOUNTY.

Through the bounty and favor of God think nothing difficult or impossible. God is so bountiful that He brings fire out from the stone; inflammable matter jets out from the interior of the earth; out of the black dust of the soil He produces beautiful flowers; from the bottom of the ocean He brings pearls and corals. When the light of His favor is shed upon us the darkness is fled.

THE DIFFERENT KINGDOMS.

All things were created for man, and man for God. Man is distinguished from all other creations. This is a special problem. There are

three general classes of creations--mineral, vegetable, and animal. Nothing is outside of these three classes. The mineral is a solid body. Its only power is that it has form; its only virtues are in having this body. The vegetable is distinguished from the mineral because in addition to the virtues contained in the mineral, it has also the power of growth. Then comes the animal kingdom, which possesses the virtues of the other two kingdoms, and in addition to them has the faculty of sensation. So it is evident that the animal kingdom is excellent above the other two. Man, who is in part animal, possesses all the virtues of the mineral, because he has a body; he possesses the added faculty of the vegetable, growth; he has the virtue of the animal kingdom, sensation; and, above all, he possesses reflective and mental power, by which he understands the reality of things. Perceiving and reflecting upon visible things, he realizes the reality of unknown things. When a man gazes at the earth he sees it as if it were level, but by his perception he finds that it is a globe. This power of perception can never be found in the animal kingdom; but man by this power can prove that the sun is a center and that the globe and other bodies revolve around it. This power of judgment, possessed only by man, proves his excellence; for the virtues and faculties of other things and substances are created in man, and, above all, he is given virtues with which the

other kingdoms are not endowed. Every thing is for man.

We speak now in examples, as Christ spoke in parables. The world is like a tree: the mineral kingdom is like the root; the vegetable kingdom is like the branches; the animal kingdom is like the blossoms; and man is like unto the fruit of that tree. The tree is but for its fruit. If the gardener did not expect fruit, he would never plant trees; in the same way every thing is for man.

There are two sides to man. One is divine, the other worldly; one is luminous, the other dark; one is angelic, the other diabolic. Man is equal to the animals in all sensuous conditions, for all animal characteristics exist in him. Likewise, divine and satanic qualities are contained in man: knowledge and ignorance; guidance and error; truth and falsehood; generosity and avarice; inclination towards God and tendency towards Satan; chastity and purity, corruption and vileness; valor and timidity; economy and avidity; good and evil; all are contained in man.

If the angelic side becomes more powerful and the divine power and brightness surround man, then the second birth takes place and eternal life is found at this point. Man becomes then the noblest among creatures. On the other hand, if sensuous qualities surround, and if terrestrial darkness and sensuous passions predominate, if they meet in man only the worldly feel-

ings, if they find him a captive of evil qualities and fallen into everlasting death, then such a man is the basest and most abject among all creatures. In such a man divine power does not exist. An animal is not considered unjust and evil because of its cruelty and injustice, for it is not endued, as is man, with divine qualities; but if man falls into the same evil condition it is evident that he has permitted his ungodly attributes to overcome the divine qualities with which he was endowed. This shows the baseness and meanness that exist in human nature.

ORIGINS OF THE MANIFESTATIONS.

Divine favor, like the sun, appears from different dawning places. In the early days, the prophets were the dawning places of the divine benedictions. The sun shone from those points. There were people who, when the Sun appeared, knew Him by His radiance, by His favors, by His rays. These were the lovers of the light, not the lovers of the rising places of the sun; and they knew the sun in His reality because they were not attracted to the dawning places. These people have always attained.

Others looked at the dawning point only, and did not perceive that the Sun changed places. For instance, the Jews always looked towards Moses, and when that Sun changed to the dawning place of Christ, they were still looking at

the first Orient. So they were veiled. There were others who were the lovers of the light itself. They had recognized the Sun in Moses, and they perceived the greater radiance in the Sun of Christ; while the Jews, who were always looking at the Sun of Moses, were deprived of the beauty of Christ.

It is evident then that we must not look at the dawning places but at the real sun. The dawning places vary, but the sun does not vary. In whatever point it may appear it is always the sun. Now all the followers of the great religions of the world are veiled because they are looking at the old dawning places and are not watching for the coming of the Sun. Your lover must love you, not your house. If he really loves you he will recognize you in whatever house you may appear; but if he is attached to the house, he will not find you if you appear in a new house. All nations are worshippers of names, not of realities. The Jews worshiped the name of Moses, but they knew him not. Christians worship a name instead of the truth. Mohammedans worship a name, not the truth. Had all been worshipping the truth they would have recognized it easily in any form, so that now they would be united in faith and no diversity would have appeared among them.

The sun is always fixed in its center. Its apparent changes are due to our conditions. In the space of a year the sun rises from one hun-

dred eighty horizon points, which are called the dawning places. As the sun of the universe has no rising or setting, so also with the Sun of Reality. According to our station, He has a rising and a setting, and we have named those points according to our own natures. For example: The Sun rose formerly from this dawning place, and the people who knew Him according to His rising place fixed their eyes upon this place; today, when the Sun rose from a far distant point, the dawning was not seen by those people who had fixed their eyes and attention upon the first center, and who were constantly gazing in that direction.

Man must be thirsty for water. He must be seeking the pure water, not the fountain; and he must know that the same salubrious water may gush from different sources. One must be a lover of the fruit, not of the tree. From whatever tree this fruit may come we must like it. The nightingale loves the flower, in whatever garden it may blossom. There are many who have loved the jar, not the wine; they should love the wine in any jar whatsoever.

ATTITUDE OF THE PEOPLE IN THE TIME OF THE APPEARANCE OF DIVINE MANIFESTATION.

Every nation is looking for a Promised One, or indeed, for two Manifestations. Zoroastrians expect two. The Jews expect Elias and Christ.

The Mohammedans expect the Mahdi and Christ. The Christians, like the Jews, are also expecting Elias and Christ. Consequently, every religion is expecting two Manifestations, one succeeding the other. Why then did they reject them notwithstanding their earnest seeking? The Jews, for instance, were eagerly and ardently awaiting the coming of Christ. What was the reason for their disbelief? For there must have been a reason. It was because the Jews did not understand the Old Testament. In the Bible Christ was promised according to certain signs, and the Jews did not recognize the signs. They did not understand the verses for they took only their literal meaning; consequently, they were deprived of an appreciation of the beauty of Christ. For instance: They were expecting the coming of Christ with sovereignty. They expected Him to have such power that He would overcome the East and the West. He was to rule with a rod of iron in His hands, and to promote and fulfil the law of Moses. He was to come in such a manner that all nations would be gathered at Zion, worshiping the God of Israel. Wolf and lamb were to drink at the same fountain; deer and lion were to feed together; eagle and partridge should live in the same nest; mouse and serpent should be in the same hole. These were the signs.

At the time of His appearance not only did the people fail to see Him as a sovereign, but He

did not possess even a span of ground. He had no sword, not even a stick. He did not promulgate the law of Moses; on the contrary, He broke the Sabbath. Not only did He fail to ascend the throne of David, but He had not even a mat on which to lie. Not only did justice fail to reign, but cruelty was spread to such a degree that He himself was crucified. It is not surprising that people said He was a liar and a false Messiah.

Notwithstanding all this, in truth Christ did have sovereignty; but it was not earthly, it was heavenly. His rod was His tongue, the Word of God, that divided right from wrong, believers from unbelievers, father from son. Thus Christ's rod and His sword were His word. Concerning the promulgation of the law of Moses—He did spread the essence of that law. As to the wolf and the lamb—these were the people of the East and the West who, being antagonistic to one another, were like wolves and lambs. Through Christ all of them were gathered under the protection of the Gospel and received light from the same book.

Now see the power of the Word of God! How we are gathered together in this one room!

The Jews, not understanding these prophecies, denied Christ. This is the condition today of other nations. The Christians do not understand the signs. They expect that the sun shall be darkened, and that the moon shall not give

its light. The stars shall fall from heaven. After this, the Son of man shall be seen descending from Heaven, riding upon the clouds, attended by hosts of angels. How is this possible, since it is well understood that the sky is but an unlimited space, and not a dome from which Christ could come? Even those who are expecting Christ's descent admit this fact.

Christ also said: "He who descended from Heaven can ascend to Heaven." He said He came from Heaven, and we know that He came from the womb of Mary. He will come this time as He came before.

Concerning the falling of the stars: Many of the stars are larger than the sun. The sun is a million times larger than the earth, and many of the stars are larger than the sun. How then can they fall upon the earth? It is as if a hundred thousand mountains should be placed upon a grain of mustard. These are symbols only. It is even said that Christ said, "I will come while you are sleeping." In spite of the earthquake, in spite of the trembling of the heavens, in spite of the falling of the stars, He said that the people could sleep during His coming! As concerns the "heavens," there is a special significance. Christ used to say, "Now I am in Heaven," while He was still upon the earth. He was never separated from Heaven, that is to say, from His highest station.

The stars are persons. The people who dis-

believed in Him fell from the heaven of the previous law. The learned men of high rank were the stars of that heaven.

Each sign has a special significance. Each is a symbol, requiring special interpretation.

CHRIST RE-ESTABLISHES THE LAW OF MOSES.

Christ himself said that whatever happened in the cycle of Moses would occur again in His time. Therefore these occurrences were repeated. We can not say that what happened in the time of Christ was remarkable, since the same had happened before. We can not say that it is extraordinary that the present springtime follows that of last year. We can not say this year that these blossoms are useless because the same ones appeared last spring. The last spring gave out its benefits, and summer, autumn, and winter followed. If a new spring did not come to the world everything would die. In every springtime there will be repeated what has happened in previous springtimes.

If you gather together all the teachings of Christ they will not exceed ten pages. If you gather together the teachings of the BLESSED PERFECTION they will exceed sixty or seventy volumes. Those of Christ have no new laws, except the regulation about divorce. Those of the BLESSED PERFECTION contain many instructions. The greatest teachings of Jesus Christ

are such as these: Love you enemies; bless those who curse you and revile you; when struck on the right cheek turn the left. Of course, these commands are right, and what is contained in the world can not equal them in value; but these instructions refer particularly to individuals, and do not deal with nations. They are personal, not universal. Those of the BLESSED PERFECTION are for all nations, like the injunction for universal peace, although even these apply to individuals as well as to nations. The instructions of Christ were heard by but few persons, and they were not fulfilled during His lifetime. There were really eleven persons who believed, although Christians themselves say that there were a hundred and twenty. The teachings of the BLESSED PERFECTION were spread throughout the world during His lifetime. Jesus Christ Himself did not see during His life the fulfillment of His commands, for He alone fulfilled them in His time; but the fulfillment of the numerous commands of the BLESSED PERFECTION commenced during His time and was witnessed by Him.

The reputation of Christ did not extend from Nazareth to Acca, and it was not until after His ascension that His doctrines spread. The reputation of the BLESSED PERFECTION extended throughout the world. Jesus Christ did not send a letter even to the chief of a village; the BLESSED PERFECTION sent letters to all the kings

of the earth. The BLESSED PERFECTION addressed Napoleon (Napolen III) with great power, plainly stating that his kingdom would be taken away from him.

The ten commandments were sanctioned by Jesus Christ, and His first order was, "Go and fulfil these commandments." When one of the rich men came saying, "I want to be one of your disciples," Christ told him to follow the ten commandments. The rich man said he knew them and that he would like something superior to them. So Christ said, "Go and give all thy wealth to the poor." The rich man pondered over His words, and went away because he could not give up his riches. Afterwards Christ said: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven." We see here that Christ renewed the ten commandments.

There are two general and principal classes of divine teachings. One is spiritual, and pertains to the moralities; this is the fundamental basis of the divine law, unchangeable and unalterable, which has been reiterated and renewed in the cycle of every prophet. Its commands refer to justice, truthfulness, compassion, faith, love of God, self-devotion, self-sacrifice, steadfastness, including all divine and merciful attributes. This is the unchanging and unmoving law of God.

The second class of divine teachings is mate-

rial and deals with behavior; such as divorce, the commandments, the way of worshipping. All these conditions have changed in the cycle of every prophet. The character of divine sovereignty has no change or transformation, but the organization and administration change continually. This is why Jesus Christ said: "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it." At the same time there are conditions that are changeable.

CAPACITY.

Abdul-Baha gave many beautiful examples concerning real capacity, some of which are as follows: There is an attractive power in everything in the world, which is called the possibility of receiving the power of progress. Look at this lamp and consider its real condition. When every material of it, as the bowl, the glass, the oil, and the wick have been gathered together, they require a hand to put a flame to it and to light it up, so forming a real lamp. What is the power that attracts the hand to light it? It is the capacity of the lamp itself. When the soil is plowed and the seed scattered in it, a capacity is created which attracts the shower of the mercy of God.

So I hope that you will grow day by day in capacity, so as to receive more and more of the divine blessings. This capacity comes but by being detached from the world and by being

attracted to God with a hearty inclination for His Cause.

By being severed from the world I do not mean holding in contempt the things of the world, for civilization and education are the means of progress; but I mean that one must not attach his heart to the world. There have been some who have had the capacity of receiving the divine blessings, but, not being detached from the world, they at last became cold in the service of God. The people will surely blame you and deride you, scorning you; but these are but instruments which will cause the blessings of God to be bestowed upon you. They will attract to you the divine blessings.

Look at the life of Jesus Christ and His disciples. All those revilings of them were but the divine graces. That crown of thorns, placed upon Him with such dreadful derision, was a crown of honor. That crown has abased and humiliated the crowns of all the sovereigns of the world. Those curses and insults were transformed into these bells pealing to His honor and in His name.

Concerning an interview between a Zoroastrian believer and two American believers this forenoon, Abdul-Baha said: Zoroastrians denied Christ for nineteen hundred years. We have tried to convert the Zoroastrians to a belief in Jesus Christ, and still the Christians are not satisfied with Us.

Extracts From a Letter After a Visit to Acca

We arrived at Haifa early in the morning of Friday, February 5th, and, as it was not wise for us to attract any attention, we were not met by any of the believers; but, after getting through the customs, we looked up one of the believers in his little store, and he conducted us to the house of Mirza Yazdi. He served us tea and by some rapid means let the believers know that we were there. Among others, there came to see us Mushkin Kalim, the writer, a man seventy years of age, who with love in his eyes said that he had been too unwell to leave his home for some days, but that the news of our arrival had so cheered his heart and strengthened him that he was able to come and bring greetings to us and to express his love for us. This is only one example of the love and kindness shown to us by the believers throughout the Orient. Ahmed Yazdi, at Port Said, and the little circle of believers with him, Mohammed Yazdi, at Alexandria,—everyone, had only the desire to show us some kindness, to be of use to us, regarding their own business always as the secondary

thing, the thing to be laid aside the moment that they have the opportunity of serving another believer in the Cause.

After a visit of an hour or so with these pure souls in Haifa, the carriage was sent for and we left for Acca. The drive is along the shore of the bay and takes about two hours. Starting from Haifa we are facing Acca all of the way. At first, it is just a white city on the water, but, as one gets nearer, the minaret and domes become distinct, and the buildings and walls begin to take shape.

Soon we were there, under the walls, through the gate, up the narrow streets, built for defence; then through the second line of fortifications by means of a second gate, twisting around right-angled corners, with streets just wide enough for the wagon and its three horses, with pedestrains close up to the walls to get out of the way, and so on to the house of Abdul-Baha. There loving greetings were awaiting us and many willing hands to carry luggage and parcels for us. We were conducted up the long flight of stone steps to the second story, and shown into the room where Abdul-Baha usually receives His visitors. After a little delay, spent with Mirza Younass Khan, the interpreter, Abdul-Baha came to us with kindly inquiries as to our health and our journey, with an apology that all that He could offer us was the hospitality of the prison. With kind words and wishes He

left us, and we were taken to lunch and then shown our rooms.

We left during the afternoon of Thursday, February 11, and of the days between I hardly know where to begin nor how to tell you about it all. We saw Abdul-Baha every day at luncheon and at dinner, and some days He would come to us for a little while in the morning or for a few minutes in the afternoon, and once He spent a long time with us at night after dinner. At the table, between courses, or when He was not eating, He would talk to us, giving us the teachings, the proofs of this great Manifestation. Always His words came with graciousness, with kindness and encouragement, and over and over again did He impress upon us the necessity of service in the Cause. For myself, I had not those great experiences of emotion that some visitors to His Presence have been seized with; but a great peace fell upon my soul, a tranquillity and a surety took possession of me, such as comes nowhere else. That is the pervading atmosphere of the Holy House, a calm security that no cataclysm can shake; a love that encircles one, that is expressed by every person there, the great love of service, of doing something for another, of losing one's self completely in the absolute love that comes only from God. The love shown us there I can never forget. May God grant that I may be able to carry the message of it to others! The solution of all the

world's misery, of all the social and economic questions of the day, is in that love for which Bahaism stands, which it touches, which is its basis, and which all Bahais should be constantly giving out.

It was not considered wise to permit us to go out very often, nor to visit the homes of any of the believers in Acca, but the friends came to us in the home of Abdul-Baha, and from all of them came that great spirit of love and unity.

Of one experience I must tell you. While we were in Acca there was also visiting Abdul-Baha a man from Bombay, one who had been a Zoroastrian. He was accompanied by his little son, a child of perhaps eleven or twelve. He heard that two Americans were there, and he begged to be allowed to see us, because in the sacred book of the Zoroastrians, written thousands of years ago, it was prophesied that a new world should be discovered, and that in the "last days" people from this new world should meet with the people of Zoroaster, that they should meet in the worship of the same God, in the same place. To him it was the literal fulfillment of the prophecy, and he wanted to see us. He was a tall man with a great simplicity of manner, that simplicity that comes of great earnestness. He said: "I can not tell you how happy I am to see you, or what my heart feels to meet you here. My words can not express it, but I would give my life for you." He added that he should always remember having seen us. Neither shall we ever forget that meeting.

In the Presence of Abdul-Baha

"You are going now to your greatest test," said a friend, as we drove to the station to begin the trip to Acca, the "White City by the Sea." The words were unintelligible to me then, and it was not until some weeks later that their real meaning became clear. Scarcely heeding them, in fact, in the happiness of making the start, they were forgotten until their truth came back to me when the vista at Acca was slowly moving into our past.

Six days in Acca! Six days in the presence of Abdul-Baha! Six days in an atmosphere of the most perfect love and peace that it has ever been mine to know. Others may have spent six weeks there, six months. That is nothing, for time is nothing in the presence of Abdul-Baha. If a thousand years are but as a day in the sight of the Lord, it may be equally true that a day may be as a thousand years. We lived a lifetime in those six days. The outside world disappeared. The past had never been. There was no future. It was as if the moment in that Presence were all of life, and that it was eternal. "Prayer, peace,

glory, and praise" enveloped us from the moment that Abdul-Baha took our hands in His in a welcoming grasp until He said, "Go back and serve!" and we left His physical presence perhaps forever in this world.

Before starting on our journey I had feared being overwhelmed with sadness at the sight of the imprisonment of our Beloved Master; so I had prayed earnestly that I might be enabled to look into His dear face with smiles only. Once in Acca the prayer was as completely forgotten as if it had never been uttered, but I found myself wondering at the readiness with which I smiled into those eyes that always smiled back at me in tender love. It was not until Acca was fading into the distance beyond the blue waters of the Mediterranean, that I remembered my prayer and marvelled at its complete realization.

The entrance into the Holy Presence came as simply and naturally as into that of some dear friend. We wondered somewhat, my husband and I, for we had thought it impossible to meet Him whom our hearts so revered and loved without being overcome with emotion. Hours passed, we met Him face to face, felt the touch of His hands, basked in the light of His smile, and still we had not been overcome by any mighty wave of irresistible feeling; and still we wondered. Days passed. The life in Acca had received us, had taken us into its loving arms, and still we were wondering when and how was to

come that mighty sweep of power. It did not come. The dominance of the Lord spoke to us only through His love, everywhere triumphant. The influence of Abdul-Baha expressed itself in the peace around us that was always unbroken. His wisdom was manifest in the reverence of the gray-haired men who bowed before its decisions in unquestioning acceptance. The efficiency of His teachings was illustrated in the eagerness of those who had been Zoroastrians, Mohammedans, or Christians to all live together there in perfect love and unity, under His sheltering care; and in their determination to carry with them to the ends of the world the same peace and harmony that wrapped them in its folds in that dreary, but glorious, little prison city, Acca.

The day of departure came. The doors of the home of Abdul-Baha closed upon us. The grim walls and the defiant gates of the crumbling old city of the Crusaders were behind us. The world and the service upon which we had been sent were before us. Slowly driving away, two questions perplexed us: What was the "greatest test" to which we had been subjected? We had been unconscious of it. Why had we not felt some overwhelming conviction of the sanctity of that Presence in which we had spent six such bliss-filled days?

In a moment we almost laughed at our simplicity in asking ourselves the latter. What experience could have been more overwhelming

in its conviction than the steadily cumulating proof of those six days? For now we realized, as it had been impossible to understand while still in the presence of our Beloved Lord, that every hour, every interview with Abdul-Baha, every observation of the life around us, had brought conviction to the reason, to the judgment, to the emotions, to the whole mental, moral, and spiritual nature, that this was indeed the Messenger of the Lord for whom we searched, sent to show the world the way into life eternal. We realized at last that when we first entered His presence so quietly, it was as if we had been taken gently up by the first swell of a great tidal wave, raised so tenderly that we had been scarcely conscious of the uplift; we had been carried on and on, higher and higher, until, as the tidal wave may sweep over coast, rocks, and even cities, we had been carried high over all worldly consciousness, and it had become to us as if the world were not. As this realization came to us, we prayed that we might never again be upon that lower spiritual level where we had been when that wave lifted us and bore us so high into the realms of absolute, common-sense, unquestioning conviction. "By their works ye shall know them," Christ said would be the final proof of the Manifestation of God in the last days, and it was through the works of Abdul-Baha and of those who serve Him that we had attained to the heights of our conviction of the truth of this Manifestation of God.

There still remained the question, What had been our "greatest test?" It had sunk into insignificance. That incorporation of the living spirit of God in a human body could never be a stumbling block now to our steps. We had met a *man*, it is true, a man with all the needs and elements of humanity; but it had been to realize how perfect an instrument of the Lord the human body may become. How else could God have spoken to us so forcibly as through those human lips that let fall divine wisdom? As through those human eyes, whose glances bore into one's soul a conception of the love and tenderness of God? As by that human tongue that never uttered a harsh or unkind word? As through that stately form, unbowed by all the grievances of the world or by the sufferings of long years of prison life and deprivation? Surely, if man is the greatest work of God, man must also be the most perfect messenger of God to man.

There had been but six days in Acca; but the human world was behind us, before us was the world of God. They were separated by a conception of timeless eternity made comprehensible to us by the visit in the presence of the Master.

HE IS GOD!

O thou herald of the Kingdom of God!

Thy detailed letter was received. Its contents indicated that thou didst travel in the cities of America and visited the friends of God until thou didst reach the general Convention held in Chicago for the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar. In thy letter thou hast written in praise and commendation of the illumination of that Convention. Truly, I say, the Convention of the Bahai delegates in Chicago was a heavenly gathering and confirmed by Divine Assistance. The Splendor of the Kingdom of ABHA shone forth and the soul-refreshing Breeze wafted from the direction of Providence. It was an Effulgence from the Rays of the Sun of Truth that the friends of God gathered in that illumined Assembly with the utmost love, unity and concord. The intentions of everyone were reinforced by Divine Confirmation, the aim of everyone was service in the Cause of God, servitude in the Threshold of the Almighty and the erection of the Mashrak-el-Azkar.

The results of that Convention in the future will be far-reaching and most important, and evident signs shall become manifest. As it was the first general Bahai Convention in America, it displayed wonderful influence. The gathering of that illumined Assembly in such a short space of time would have been impossible without the Power of the Divine Covenant and Testament. But The Covenant has such a great sway that it astonishes the minds. In every region the sign of the Power of the Covenant is apparent and manifest.

For instance: In Persia the fire of revolution blazed in such wise that all communities, government and nation became afflicted with the most severe trials; but the Power of the Covenant protected the Bahai friends to such a degree that in this turbulent storm no dust fell upon them, except in one locality, which became the cause of the spreading of the Religion of God and the diffusion of the Word of God. Now all the parties in Persia are wondering how the people of Baha were guarded and protected.

Praise be to God! that in Teheran, and all the provinces of Persia, the Call of God has been raised, the Ensign of the Covenant has been unfurled, the cry of "*Ya-Baha-el-ABHA!*" has been heard and the melody of the Kingdom of ABHA has been promulgated among the people of intelligence.

—ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Extract from a Tablet to Mr. Howard
MacNutt, translated by Mirza Ahmad
Sohrab, August 14, 1909.



First Bahai Temple Unit of Convention
Chicago U.S.A. March 21, 1908

اولین واحد مذهب بایهائی در آمریکا
در شهر شیکاگو ایالت ایلینوی
در روز ۲۱ مارس ۱۹۰۸

THE FIRST GENERAL BAHAI CONVENTION IN AMERICA: CORINTHIAN HALL, MASONIC TEMPLE, CHICAGO, MARCH 21, 1908

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless scuffles, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BABA'OLLAH.

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No. 4

[FIRST ARTICLE]

SIXTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF BAHAI TEMPLE UNITY

CHICAGO, APRIL 25-28, 1914

By ALFRED E. LUNT

"Verily, the founding of the Mashrak-el-Azkar will mark the inception of the Kingdom of God on earth. It is the evident standard waving in the center of that great continent of America. Its gates will be flung wide to mankind; prejudice towards none, love for all."

—ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

EAST and west, Atlantic and Pacific, north and south met in loving union when the Bahai delegates, hastening from all parts of the Occident, assembled in Chicago, Saturday, April 25th, 1914, for the Sixth Annual Convention of Bahai Temple Unity. Seattle and Spokane shook hands with Boston and New York, likewise Montreal with Washington and Cincinnati, while the representatives of the more central cities sat down together in family counsel. Far away London sent its greetings in the much enjoyed presence of Miss Jack, and the beloved Egyptian village of Ramleh, dear to the heart of every Bahai, was brought near by the presence of Mrs. Isabel Frazer, a pilgrim recently returned from that favored spot.

But these Conventions, unique and peerless in the assemblies of mankind, possess a quality more significant than the mere gathering of a few score of people from all parts of America. For the invisible but potent threads of love—the susceptibilities of the hearts of thousands—are carried by each delegate, each, as it were, a winged messenger harnessed to a hundred shimmering threads streaming out from the Assembly at home, until as the delegates meet in the Convention city the spiritual eye sees a vast network stretching far and wide in every direction; threads which are woven into the "robe of love," concerning which His Holiness BABA'OLLAH has counselled the believers to "sew." And these threads are vibrant with life without which the Convention would be as nothing, for the life of the Convention is the life of the hearts of all, those hearts which in turn are pulsating with the Divine Life pouring forth from the Dayspring of Mercy, the Sun of Truth and Reality. Therefore these Conventions have neither latitude nor longitude,

nor are they limited geographically, but in them the Oneness of God, and the oneness of humanity must be realized—for in reality this network of love, which is here spoken of, has no termination in the Occidental Assemblies, but rather girdles the earth, entering all the continents and countries and finding its center in that Holy Threshold which is also its source.

* * * *

The Chicago Committee, with characteristic hospitality, engaged headquarters at the Great Northern Hotel throughout Saturday for the convenience of arriving delegates and friends. At 12 o'clock noon, Mrs. Corinne True welcomed active and honorary members of the Unity at her home, 5338 Kenmore Avenue, where a delightful luncheon was served, followed by a business session of the Executive Board, until at 4 o'clock Mrs. True opened her doors wide for the stream of delegates, visiting friends and the many members of the Chicago Assembly who attended the reception announced for that hour. Here passed more than two hours of renewing interrupted friendships, the exchange of the news of the Cause in various regions, and a right happy time. Refreshments and music added to the good cheer, and happy, shining faces furnished proof that the Glad-tidings, which were the real cause of this meeting, were in each heart.

At the corner of Michigan Avenue and Twelfth Street, far down town, on the second floor of a large building is the "Noontide Club." At this spot, at 8 o'clock p. m., a large company of the friends sat down at long tables to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Feast of El-Rizwan. This gathering was in charge of the Chicago Assembly, and was presided over by Mr. Albert R. Windust, whom all know and love as one of the editors of the

STAR OF THE WEST. The room was large and brightly lighted, and the repast bounteous and palatable. Chairman Windust opened with the Words of the Center of the Covenant—"O People, the doors of the Kingdom are opened"—then appropriately and warmly welcomed the visiting delegates, and the following responded, in the order named, to the invitation of the Chairman: Mrs. Geary of Seattle, Wash., Miss Edna McKinney of Malden, Mass., Mrs. Nellie Phillips of Los Angeles, Mr. William H. Hoar of Jersey City, N. J., Mrs. Lincoln of Brooklyn, Mr. Alfred E. Lunt of Boston, Mr. Louis G. Gregory of Washington, D. C., Mrs. Christ Olsen of Racine, Wis., Mrs. Nels Peterson of Fruitport, Mich., Mrs. Kate Ives of Salem, Mass., Mr. Edward B. Kinney of New York, Mrs. Annie L. Pamerton of Cincinnati, Miss Marion E. Jack of London, England, Miss Elsie Pomeroy of Montreal, Mrs. West of Spokane, Wash., Mrs. George L. Drum of Baltimore, Mrs. Frank Spink of Muskegon, Mich., Miss Cora E. Gray of Urbana, Ill., and Mr. Albert H. Hall of Minneapolis. In all, nineteen contributed a few words direct from their hearts, in most cases bringing, the loving greetings from each Assembly to Chicago, giving a brief account of the conditions in the Cause in each place and adding some special thought of joy, exhortation and love to this feast of good things, thus preparing the hearts for the meetings to follow.

Sunday morning at 11 o'clock was the scheduled time for the gathering of the people on the Mashrak-el-Azkar grounds in Wilmette. As the groups assembled from their different locations, thoughts and memories turned backward two years to that occasion (whose meaning will ever wax greater) when His Holiness Abdul-Baha lifted up his blessed voice at the dedication of these grounds, saying: "*The Power which has gathered you here is truly a colossal Power. It is the extraordinary Power; it is a Divine Power which gathers you hither. It is the Divine Favor of BAHÁ'U'LLAH which gathered you together.*" Never did the air seem balmy, or the sunlight more brilliant—while just over the rise incomparable Lake Michigan shone and gleamed, sending forth its unrivalled coloring, and all in motion with the light breezes. Is it too much to say that as the years pass, and generations march on, even this beautiful picture will gradually fade in the memory and will no more be known—while ever increasing in power and significance, furnishing the real motive and reason for all these anniversaries that are to come, will stand the figure

of Him whose love has brought us together, who came "out of the East"—"out of prison"—to this far country, setting up here His Banner of Divine Love which is the true sovereignty, and on this spot uttered words of dedication concerning that great symbol of the oneness of humanity—the Mashrak-el-Azkar?

There was no formal service on this occasion. The worship was of an inner rather than an outer nature. Presently, Mr. Albert H. Hall, Chairman of the Temple Unity, called the friends together near the spot designated as the center of the Edifice, and after a few words of explanation, read most impressively a portion from the *Surat-ul-Hykl*. Perhaps never did the meaning of that most profound discourse penetrate the understanding more than on this occasion. Itself a discourse of the Temple, the depth and profundity of the thought seemed to clear, and as the expressions of the *Surat* addressed to: "O Temple of Holiness" (pp. 41, 42); "O Heart of this Temple" (p. 43); "O thou Foot of this Temple: We have created Thee from the iron—be straightforward in the way of thy Lord that through Thee will be straightened the feet of the devotees in the Path of Thy Lord the Precious, the Wise" (p. 39) were read, the mind seemed to grasp more definitely than before something of the meaning of the words of His Holiness Abdul-Baha when he said that "The Mashrak-el-Azkar represents the Body of the Manifestation."

At 3 p. m. the first public meeting was held in Sts. John Hall, Masonic Temple. This took the form of a sacred service, with Mr. Charles H. Greenleaf presiding. The hall was full and contained many seekers, and also many of the Chicago Assembly who had not previously appeared at the earlier gatherings. All were happy. The opening was a piano number entitled "Peace, Sweet Peace," by Miss Lillian James, following which the congregation sang "Great Day of God." Chairman Greenleaf then read from the *Hidden Words* the beautiful paragraphs beginning—"O Son of Spirit, I have created thee rich: why dost thou make thyself poor? Noble have I made thee: why dost thou degrade thyself?" etc. "O Son of Man Thou art My Possession, and My Possession shall never be destroyed: why art thou in fear of thy destruction? Thou art My Light and My Light shall never become extinct: why dost thou dread extinction? Thou art My Glory (BAHA) and My Glory shall not be veiled: Thou art My Garment and My Garment shall never be outworn. Therefore abide in thy

love to Me, that thou mayest find Me in the Highest Horizon."

Also from the *Words of Wisdom*, and the stirring prayer "The Day of God," closing with the words—"Praise be unto Thee, O Desire of the nations. Praise be to Thee, O Beloved of the hearts of the yearning." After this followed silent prayer and the playing of the "Benediction" softly.

Mme. Ragna Linné then sweetly sang "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." Mr. Greenleaf then launched into his opening address, beginning with these impressive words—"Just a word to those who may not be familiar with the Revelation of BAHÁ'ÓLLAH, the LORD of mankind, who has come again in this age in fulfillment of promise and prophecy." He then alluded to the fact that in the Bahai gatherings the word "stranger" has no place, for in this day all are friends (referring to the new faces present). "This meeting today is certainly significant, for gathered here today are delegates and representatives from many Assemblies all over this broad land, from Honolulu, from Canada, from England. They are assembled here in Convention to accomplish a certain definite purpose and that purpose is to promote and further the building of a great Temple, a great Mashrak-el-Azkar which in its symbolism, in its nine sides, points to Unity, the unity of the entire human race. The invitation is extended to all without regard to race, color or creed, to enter its portals and there worship God in the silence after the dictates of the conscience and heart. This is the universal aim of this wonderful Revelation. In the hospice, the hospitals, the schools and various other institutions included in this Edifice are exemplified and set forth the great fact that he who would climb the heights to God, who would ascend to that for which he was created, must apply in *deeds and actions* the strength and inspiration he receives as he journeys in the Land of the Spirit. Why therefore is this not worthy of your investigation, of your prayerful attention? Now we want to hear from these friends from the different parts and I only regret that I cannot call upon them all, because, dear friends, this is the day when heart speaks to heart, and I know all of these delegates have a message for you from the depths of their experiences and their hearts."

The congregation then joined in singing "Tell the Wondrous Story," after which the Chairman called upon Mr. Alfred E. Lunt of Boston.

Mr. Lunt began by saying—"It is surely a wonderful privilege to be here and bring to you the message of love, of fellowship and of co-operation from Boston." He referred to the faithful labors of the Chicago Assembly in the advancement of the Cause for so many years, as the Assembly which first heard the Call in this country, and to the days when he had the privilege of attending the meeting in Chicago [in 1909] when "our dearly loved and lamented brother Chase was here and sat before you as your presiding officer—the great love that he brought. I am sure he is very happy today. . . . From Boston I would bring you the greetings of the hearts. . . . The work there began back in 1906, but I think only within the last few years, has the Assembly been really founded in steadfastness. When Abdul-Baha came to Boston in the spring of 1912 he brought with him that wonderful cup of love and severance, that pure blessing which has quickened every Assembly in this country and from that moment Boston began to flourish as a rose in the desert. He said to us: 'I pray God that you may become as a rose-garden'—and we have prayed that this might be made possible, and we have realized in the months that have gone by since he said farewell that he has recreated the Boston Assembly, for from that moment the hearts of the believers began to pulsate as one heart, the lives began to be lived as one life, to walk with the same feet, living in 'one land.' Thus is coming the realization of the sweet Word—'This handful of dust the world is one home.' This is the nucleus of one great family, and as that love and unity became concentrated in the hearts of the people great results appeared, for the attraction of the hearts began to draw those souls who were ready to hear the Message, and from all parts they came. . . . With this priceless gift of Unity, let us look to its source. Abdul-Baha is the great Heart of the world today, the center of God's Covenant. From him is streaming the spiritual Life-force which is comparable to the circulation of the blood in man. Therefore, until we unite and permit the Life-blood of the Center of the Covenant to reach into our lives, to complete the circulation, we are retarding the wonderful fulfillment he has promised, we are withholding the bounties of God from the people, we are hindering the fulfillment and completion of this great Edifice, the Mashrak-el-Azkar. Therefore he has placed a great and solemn duty upon every one of us to show forth such unity and love, to do away with

diverse opinions, to the degree that health-bestowing Life-force shall pulsate in every one of our hearts, and accomplish its divine purpose."

Mrs. Annie L. Parmerton, of Cincinnati, next called upon, gave loving greetings, then asked to be excused, having spoken the previous evening.

Mr. William H. Hoar, representing Jersey City, then spoke, and beautifully referred to his early experiences in Bahai work in Chicago, saying: "Chicago is to me the house of my father. My thought today is, in the words of the Holy One, 'O son, give Me thy heart.' For man has only his heart to give. All else God has for Himself, for He is the ruler over all the earth 'and all that therein is.' Nevertheless through the freedom of the will which He has bestowed upon man, man possesses power to withhold his heart from God. This is a tremendous fact, yet how sad a thing it can become. So, as we came penniless and naked into the world, our hearts our only possession, controlling only this rarest of treasures, the free-will, let us now render up the only thing we can—give our hearts, to God; and if this be done rest assured that this country will be swept from East to West by the power of the Holy Spirit." . . .

Mrs. Mariam Haney of Washington, D. C., followed with a rare collection of passages from the Holy Writings of BAHÁ'U'LLAH and Abdul-Baha. Speaking of the outer separation of the friends in the different cities she said: "Bahais have a conscious realization of spiritual union, and we are happy that God mercifully permits us to feel and acknowledge the spiritual relationship. . . . What then gives a Bahai the courage to crystallize words into deeds? A Bahai takes the Word of God revealed today by BAHÁ'U'LLAH and Abdul-Baha and feeds his soul upon it. That Word has in it a creative power which resurrects, recreates, transforms. Through the power of the Life-giving utterances, they are possessed of courage and long to put into practice the Commands and Exhortations of the Living LORD. Listen to this Word of BAHÁ'U'LLAH: 'Hear the Voice of God and do not compare this Day with any other Day, neither the wonderful sweet Words of God with any other words; look to the apparent matters with thine own eye, and do not follow anyone in knowing the Greatest and Brilliant Orb.' And again, this wonderful Word of Abdul-Baha: 'We must regard the blood of man as sacred. We must not shed the holy blood of man for

the paltry earth. We must all agree upon one fundamental principle. That principle is the oneness of the kingdom of humanity. In this age BAHÁ'U'LLAH has breathed the Holy Spirit into the dead body of the world. Consequently every weak soul is strengthened by these fresh, Divine Out-breathings. Every poor man will become rich, every darkened soul will become illumined, every ignorant one will become wise because the *confirmations of the Holy Spirit are descending like unto torrents. A new era of Divine Consciousness is upon us.* The world of humanity is going through a process of transformation. *A new race is being developed.* The thoughts of human brotherhood are permeating all regions. New ideals are stirring the depths of hearts, and a new spirit of Universal Consciousness is being profoundly felt by all men." . . .

Mrs. Haney closed with a striking account of Abdul-Baha's closing words before leaving America, when after speaking of the events in the Balkans and the absence in the hearts of the people there of the spirit of brotherly love, he turned to the Bahais present and said—"But what excuse will you have to offer before God, for you are informed of the Mysteries?"

Our colored brother, Mr. Louis G. Gregory of Washington, D. C., gladdened all present by a few words spoken in his always impressive manner. He said in part: "I can only testify to the renewed inspiration, and the high privilege I feel in being in this presence. The illumined faces here, souls who have made sacrifices in the Path of God, in whose lives are reflected the virtues of the Supreme One in this Day, give me greater courage than ever. I shall take from here and carry to my humble duties fresh inspiration. The only successful soul in this Day of Wonder is he who treads in the Path of God. We are commanded by BAHÁ'U'LLAH and Abdul-Baha to that which, viewed from the human standpoint, is impossible. But the light of genius comes to him who accepts the Divine strength and power. Then nothing the world gives can deter or discourage us. Those who follow God shall partake of God-like attributes." . . .

As delegate from New York City, Mr. Edward B. Kinney responded by saying: "It seems as if my better self had already spoken through the lips of those who have preceded. Here soul speaks to soul and all are as one family and speak with the same tongue. So, they have spoken my thought. In all the Assemblies we find this power of unity growing. We find the translation of this glory into the

life itself. Each of us feels uplifted by what is being accomplished by you and by every Assembly." Mr. Kinney then told most feelingly of the little, sweet-natured old man in one of the cities who first turned his back on the churches and became a "mere nebulous believer" in the God of imagination, who dwelt beyond the stars—then was attracted to the Cause, but losing heart after this until Abdul-Baha revived him and told him to go back to the church, and how through this there came a voluntary reaching out from this church to the Bahais, and a community of common purpose established. And the speaker pointed the lesson this taught by showing that in all this time the head of the church had been watching the Bahais to note their lives, and their purity, and that he had become satisfied that here was something far beyond mere pretension. So, concluded Mr. Kinney, "we are being watched. Let us be worthy of this attention."

Now followed Mrs. Kate Ives of Salem, Mass., who spoke of the contribution to the Cause which that old colonial city and its neighbor, Beverly, had already furnished, giving the names of those reared there who had arisen in service, and asking the prayers of all that by another Convention, Salem, "the old witch city," might be able to send to the 1915 Convention a report of great work accomplished.

Mme. Linné sweetly and powerfully sang "The New Jerusalem," and the Chairman called upon Mrs. Claudia S. Coles of Washington, D. C. Mrs. Coles read a prayer of Abdul-Baha, then presented a paper emphasizing the message and realization that comes to us from a study of the Bible, we who come from the Christian root: "then find the message in the Jewish root from which Christianity budded." This she exemplified by quotations from the apostles, in the Gospel, and from the Hebrew prophets, showing references among others to the "Branch of God." Mrs. Coles then spoke of the "prepared soul" as the keen and shining chisel, differing from other perhaps equally good instruments by the fact that this prepared one was quickened to its fullest usefulness by having fitted itself, through the Great Bestowal, to the notch (of service) and, in addition, put itself into entire subjection to the "compressed air" (the Divine Power) which guided it.

Mrs. Geary of Seattle, Wash., although her words were few, brought the fragrances of

the great garden of the west, which has welcomed the Bahai spirit with such happiness. She told us that the friends of the west send their love, and ask the prayers of all for their advancement.

The closing speaker was Mr. Albert H. Hall of Minneapolis. He began by saying: "We are all spirit this afternoon. How quickly we respond to spirit. . . . Do we realize that all are our brothers without preference or choice? It's going to be hard to lift up that standard in this country. For in Congress it is regarded as Holy Writ that the white man is supreme. No greater blasphemy was ever current. Conceive the insult we give to God whom it is claimed is a God of preference." Mr. Hall then in his inimitable, convincing way gave a really remarkable interpretation of the Biblical story of Jonah, pointing out with logic and accuracy the lesson taught by this ancient account. Particularly he laid stress upon how the Divine Love reaches out to the lowly and the uncultured among His people, by quoting from the Book of Jonah how God spoke to the Prophet concerning His Favor upon those inhabitants of Nineveh, "men and women who know not right hand from left, and many cattle," and that He had spared that city because of these lowly ones. "If He prefers any, He prefers those who are at the bottom, those who have not the temporal but have sacrificed this to the eternal. Not pride but humility is the lesson of the perfect social state." . . .

The meeting closed with the congregation joining in "The Benediction" with Prelude, by Mme. Linné.

* * *

Of the details of the Convention itself, held in Corinthian Hall, Masonic Temple, mornings and afternoons of Monday and Tuesday, the readers of the STAR OF THE WEST will be informed in a forthcoming issue. In all the gatherings, whether business sessions or social and public meetings, the spirit of oneness held sway, and at times the power which these Conventions know so well—that rare thrill of the life of the Kingdom, so indescribable, so pure and holy—poured down upon all. To many, the most powerful moments were those when the delegates arose to tell the simple yet wonderful tale of the spread of the Cause in a distant city, or how the Fire of Divine Love was uniting the hearts of the friends, and especially when the dearly beloved ones from Racine, Fruitport, Kenosha and nearby points, their

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon firmness, firmness, firmness!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. V

Azamat 1, 70 (May 17, 1914)

No. 4

THE MASHRAK-EL-AZKAR IN AMERICA: A CALL

CAN we of today comprehend or realize the miracles that are taking place in the Bahai world? One of the greatest of miracles was witnessed at the Mashrak-el-Azkar Convention when delegates from so many parts of the world gathered to celebrate the Fiftieth or Golden Anniversary of the Declaration of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH to the world.

Minds are unable to grasp the tremendous transpositions that have occurred in the Bahai Cause during that half-century. Fifty years ago, BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH, in exile and banishment, called to the kings and rulers of the earth to obey God. His Epistles of warning were not heeded and many of them lost their crowns because they did not listen to God's Mouth-piece, as He had foretold.

Today, if we go to Europe, we will find the Cause of this Exiled Prisoner growing and spreading. Likewise, in Asia, in Africa, and in America—the "new world" to the peoples of the other continents—in every state of the United States, from coast to coast, has His Teaching been heard and in the great metropolis of Chicago His followers gathered during this Feast of El-Rizwan on a beautiful tract of land purchased by the loving offerings of men and women from all parts of the globe, upon which is to be erected a Supreme House of Worship.

Truly, the Power of God alone could cause this great miracle. But more is to be accomplished through this same Creative Power, and that is: the erection of the Building. The followers of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH should not pause a

moment in the great endeavor to complete the Mashrak-el-Azkar. Abdul-Baha says, "the most important thing in this day is the SPEEDY ERECTION of the Edifice. Its mystery is great and cannot be unveiled as yet. In the future it will be made plain."

A promise has come direct from Abdul-Baha that he will return to America. He told Zenat Khanum, when leaving his presence, not to feel sad, that he would see her in America. Shall we sit idly by and allow the golden moments to be wasted on non-essential matters? Will we be found unprepared, when the Orb of the Covenant returns to America?

A stated amount as a building fund has been named. Is not this in itself a call to the Bahais, singly and collectively, to make every effort possible to raise the fund? It is a call to activity. Work, work, work!—so that the "Greatest Branch" of God may dedicate the foundation and lay the corner-stone of this Edifice and pronounce a blessing upon it that will give it a superlative degree of importance throughout countless ages.

May the Fiftieth year of the Declaration of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH be fitly commemorated by deeds according to His wish and Command.

In order to make our present financial system more business-like and safe, all remittances should be made payable to Bahai Temple Unity.

Respectfully submitted,

CORINNE TRUE, Financial Secretary of
Bahai Temple Unity, 5338 Kenmore
Avenue, Chicago.

"O ye believers of God! We are sending to America, the maid-servant of God, Zeenat Khanum, with Mrs. Wise. She is on her way to Chicago. Unquestionably, all the friends of God will exercise the utmost consideration to Zeenat Khanum." ABDUL-BAHA ABRAS.



Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi and his bride, Zeenat Khanum

Photo by Sykes
Chicago

ZEENAT KHANUM

ZEENAT KHANUM arrived in Montreal, Canada, April 29, 1914, where Dr. Bagdadi was awaiting her. It was the wish of Abdul-Baha that they should be married in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell of that city. The minister who officiated at the ceremony astonished all by reading from the Bahai Writings, and the couple repeated the holy verse from *Kitab-el-Akdas*, pertaining to the Law of the Bahai marriage: "*Verily, in God we all are pleased.*" Then Dr. Bagdadi, his bride and Mrs. Wise took the train for Chicago, the latter stopping in Detroit.

When the couple arrived in Chicago they were received by a number of the Bahais and some of the delegates to the Convention, and welcomed with the Bahai greeting, "*Allaho*

Abha!" The spirit of joy was manifest in the faces of all the friends.

On the following Sunday evening a reception in their honor was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Lesch. All the friends were present; communions were read and a Persian dinner was served. The chanting of the bride was a delightful feature of the occasion, which was in accord with Abdul-Baha's wish that she should chant in all the gatherings of the Bahais.

Zeenat Khanum is the daughter of Hossein Aga, who was the personal attendant of Abdul-Baha. His father's name was Haji Ali Asghar, and he was one of the prominent merchants of Tabriz and an old, earnest Bahai. He and his family migrated to Adrianople and were most happy to live near the Blessed Perfec-

tion [BAHA'O'LLAH]. When the question of BAHAI'OLLAH's exile to another distant point was rumored abroad, Haji Ali Asghar went to BAHAI'OLLAH and supplicated that he and his family be included in the company. When the exiled party reached the pestilential town of Acca, the authorities lodged them in the military barracks. Hossein Aga at this time was a young man, and was detailed by the Blessed Perfection to the personal service of Abdul-Baha. When Abdul-Baha received guests—as he was wont to do at all times—Hossein Aga was there to serve refreshments.

At that time there lived in Acca a Bahai by the name of Mohammed Ibrahim Ameer—a Bahai veteran who took an active part in the famous events of Nayreez and whose history alone makes a book. Years before he had left Persia and migrated to Bagdad to look in the face of BAHAI'OLLAH, and from that time on he never left Him. In the household of BAHAI'OLLAH there lived a lovely girl, and after leaving the military barracks she was selected as the future wife of Mohammed Ibrahim Ameer. Quietly they were married, and years rolled on, each year adding its quota of happiness. From this marriage a girl was born, she was given the fascinating name of Badi-eh Khanum, and under the protecting wing of the Blessed Perfection she grew up.

Thus during all these years Hossein Aga and this girl, Badi-eh Khanum, had been developing and advancing toward one common destiny. They became engaged, and in due time were married. They lived together most happily, the husband continuing his services at the court of Abdul-Baha. In the course of time God blessed them with six fine children, three boys and three girls. They are all living. The names of the boys are Mohammed, Ahmad and Ata, and the girls' names are Fatemah Khanum, Zeenat Khanum and Habour Khanum. The eldest daughter, Fatemah Khanum, on the feast of Naurooz, March 21st, was married to Mirza Ali Akbar, who was with Abdul-Baha

in America and whom all know and love very much. The next daughter, Zeenat Khanum, is the subject of this article, and the youngest of all, Habour Khanum, is attending the College in Beirut.

Zeenat Khanum is a beautiful and charming young woman. There is no doubt that her arrival in America and her stay among the Bahais will be an added impetus toward the unity of the East and the West. Brought up in the calm, infinitely delicate atmosphere of the Holy Family, imbued with the spiritual beauty of the divine life of Abdul-Baha, filled with the dreams and silence of the magic East, she will make many hearts happy. The inner life of a spiritual-hearted Eastern woman is a garden of imperishable flowers. It is deep, calm and balanced. Her gentle ideals and thoughts are "of a delicacy of perception so fine and subtle that language itself is too coarse to express their miraculous shadings and discriminations." It is a rose the "fragrant loveliness" of which perfumes all the nostrils. "It is a revelation of indefinable things—of a beauty and strength in repose, of an iridescent mistiness which subdues and softens the form and color of all things seen, of a silence that is not cold and empty, but faintly musical and tinted, of a sound beyond all hearing and a vision beyond all sight."

Abdul-Baha says: "I have trained Zeenat Khanum, and having confidence in her, therefore, I sent her to America; also because the daughters of Hossein Aga are my daughters. Moreover, after this I have hopes in her that, God willing, she will become the 'Zeenat' (adornment) of America."

* * *

On behalf of all the Bahais in America and throughout the Bahai world, the STAR OF THE WEST extends congratulations to its fellow-worker, Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi and greetings and love to his bride, Zeenat Khanum.

—The Editors.

SIXTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF BAHAI TEMPLE UNITY

[Continued from page 53]

faces shining, added their treasure, crystal clear, to the testimony in His Love. Though the words of their mouths were not eloquent as eloquence is judged in the hails of learn-

ing, the love and severance in those hearts was so great that the Fragrances of the Kingdom were enabled to reach that place and all were made happy.

[NOTE—To be continued in No. 5 issue]

OUR PERSIAN SECTION this issue contains: (1) Talk by Abdul-Baha pertaining to the Oneness of Divinity; (2) Mirza Mahmood Zargam; (3) the School of Tarbiat; (4) progress of the Cause in America; (5) trans-

lation of Article concerning the Cause which appeared in a Buda-Pest, Hungary, newspaper; (6) article from another Hungarian newspaper; (7) news from the Holy Land.

عالم انسانی شمیم مهم افند از خطای ایشان شادمان شد که بیاس دست زدند و اظهار سرور نمودند مسترا کنند و آبسرم که شخی از کشتیها عزیم کا تو کیکهاست بعالمی شیرین این مهبان محترم در معرق غود و اخر مجلس باز انجانب خود و حصار اظهار تشکر و وضو صمیمی از تعالیم عالیله صادره از فراب معلوم تجلیل شرف نمود .	انصا ترجمه روزنامه نیریزه جزیرال بدایت ۱۲ اردیبهشت ۱۳۱۳ عبدالبهاء و عبادین حضرت عبدالهاء عباس رئیس امر کایان دین در ایلات ایران هنگام خطابه ای او افزودند در آن محل جلیل که مخصوص ایشانها شده بود و در وقت عبدالهاء حکایات الفنی و الهیه در ظاهر و باطن تشریف فرمایان شهر شده اند تا تعالیم انوار و محبت انسان ترویج نمایند رؤسای شهر و زنان و مردان مستمع به بالاسهای داخل برای استماع خطابه ایشان حاضر شده بودند عجب تر این بود که اشخاصی منصبان حربیه مفتون مایل صلح بودند و جمعی از عقلا و کاردان این مملکت نیز حضور داشتند در محضر خطابه حضرت عبدالهاء با محاسن و عظمه سفید و بالاسهای بلند شرقی ایستاده نفوذ می فرمودند همیشه شرق ایشان بر همه نمایان بود و جمعی از پرسو و سها و اعیان در محضر اطراف ایشان نشسته بودند و صورتشان و بیان ایشان بسیار سلیس و ملج و چنین معلوم می شد که از خاندانی هستند که قرون ماضیه جاری ثبات و کجاست بوده اند و عالمه تجیه جلیله ابرار و از جمله تعالیمی که بیان فرمودند صریح و قوی و تساوی حقوق رجال و زنان بود و اینکه اختلاف مایه ممات و محبت و اتحاد حیات و در انسان نوع و روحانیه باید غالب بر قوی باشد زیرا در تنگ شان حیوانی است که اگر برای قوت می دزد و می خورد اگر ما او را بیایم بکشیم اما اگر شخصی هزار انسان را در ساعتی قتل نماید اول شجاع گوئیم اینجای سفاقت ما آنکه باید در صلح و صلح گوئیم و سبب رحمت و سعادت
از اضرع عبدالستار بقیم جناب آقا میرزا علی اکبر بحرانی علیه السلام الله الحمد لله هیکل انور الطهر حضرت سربا انور روحی لفرز انبیه الفداء کمال سلامتی را دارند و تقربا یک هفت است تشریف بروند به طبریه . مسافرن هر روز دسته وارد می شوند یک قیامی است آنانکه تازه وارد می شوند با وجد و سرور می آیند . آنانکه مرخصند با چشم گریان می روند و همچنین تلامذه مدرسه کلبه بیروت آمدند و بکمال روح و هیجان شرف شدند ناقضین که مرده بودند از این عبور مسافرن دیگر نفس از ایشان قطع شده است .	تجمل اخت : انصای الهی شرف هست التماس دعا و ارج چشمه روشن . و آنانکه مرخصند انشاء الله بی عیال و اقارب میشوند اما اهل النقص " انذی نقص العمد لنعمته الخلق و المکملات "

هوای

ای شهنشاه خوش آفرین نامه و بریده رسید حال از عالم
از هر مقلی خطابه‌های اعیان الله را غنیمت میدانند و در هر یک
شعرش نشر میکنند ملائکه کن قوا را الله را که میگویند که
دوستان ترجیح بر الله می‌نمایند و افتخار میکنند و حال از جهان
نیستند و در هیچ یک از خطابه‌ها مقتدره الله را حق تعالی
نهاد الله بنوده و این اختصاص حضرت بهادر اوج که یا سرافراز
پادشاه ایران بر داشته اند و یونان و غیر یونان مقرب بعبادت
ایران هستند و هذا من فضل ربی و علیک الهام الاهی
عبد الهی و عباس

صیقل از روزنامه

از روزنامه پسر لایه پادشاهی بختیاری بختیاری
اللی طبع شده، شماره ۷۵ سال ۱۳۰۶

عبد الهی و عباس میان و جانشین ایشان گشتند و در انظار و
مشروطه ترکی عبد الهی و عباس آمدند و این امر را
عظیم یافت مثل مختلفه از عاقل متعدد اهل و کلمه
ترکستان عربستان مسلمان یهود مجوس و نصاری
و در این شخص جلیل بخت شدند ایشان از اهل و کلمه
شفای امراض نمیکند ولی بواسطه بیانات و خطای عقل
و نفس و دل تحت و ترقی میدهند علی الخصوص در ترقی
جدا بینی که در ایشان است هر شخصی غلب میشود از این
ضعیفه و بعضی ملل را شفا میدهد اما غلبه این ملل
در اتحاد عمومی است که نفس از طرق مختلفه در این شاه راه
و خطا وارد میشوند و ترک خود برستی و غموس میکنند

حضرت عبد الهی و عباس سوره شفا تعلیم میدهند و انبیا
باید جمیع خدمت نفع بشرفایند و در هر شیء انواع انشا
نکوشند همچنین باید ترک تداوید و اوهام و دینه نمایند
و قلبه را از انکایش عداوت بیکدیگر پاک کنند تا شرف و غلب
مانند دو دوبران و در غرض شوند خیمه طبع عمومی
افزاید . در این امر بهایست نیست . باید بر اهل
اعمال خبر بدهد انشا بکار باشد بدو یک اگر یکی از شاهها
وارد شهر شود باید در خبر و هوا و طبع و سلام از قبل بمانند
باشد تا جمیع شهادت دهند که این شخص فی الحقیقه
بهائی است با اعمال ثابت نمایند که بهائی حقیقی است !
بجهت نشر این تعلیم حضرت عبد الهی و عباس بدایست فاش
آوردند و همچنین بهائی در جمیع بلاد منعقد است
و این تعلیم را بالنسب مختلفه ترجمه و نشر نمایند
ما باید تقدیر کنیم که این شخص جلیل با این کبر است
پسر سافقت امیر کالینین و پدر و دیگر و از بزرگان
شدند با چهار نفر خدام که یکی از آنها میرزا احمد سر لایه بختیاری
و میرزا ورود و دکتر گیس و این و ستر گاس کوکس
رئیس دالمانسون و پروفیسر جهانس و میرزا جعفر خورشید
و سرور و در حالیکه که کتشف حاصل نمودند .

در سر راهی که در شرق برای تعدیل انکار و تلاق ظاهر
شده خطابه فی دلائل ایمان ادا خواهند نمود و این
نای که بواسطه پروفیسر جهانس ترجمه خواهد شد این
وین جمید تقلید یا ملائحتی نیست هر چند رسالت
دینیه ندارد و تعالیم ساد است و عقلی با فایده
ممتنع است پیروان آن بسیار و هنوز عده شان در
معین عقیده کرد . بکار تعلیم و نشر وحدت عالم انسانی
و دیگر اتحاد ادیان و موستریان امر و الدار و انصار
بها الله از بزرگان ایران بوده اند و پسران ایشان باب
در سنه ۱۸۴۴ در ۲۳ ماه فی ظاهر شد هرگز این
پیروان این شوی و مقتول شد ولی بالکسر این شهادت
سبقت بر این شد و بواسطه حضرت بها الله این امر
در سایر بلاد نیز منتشر شد اما بر این اثر این تعالیم حضرت
بها الله بیات و صدقات شایسته دیدند و مجلس عکا
افزاید و در سنه ۱۸۹۲ صعود نمودند و حضرت

مجلس سیم در بیان توبیت

ضرورت امر توبیت و توبیت واجب کمالی علی اری نیت که امروز
براعت مجهول باشد تا در این رشته و موضع بیست بیان
و جلب اذهان حاجت آید و بنابر این در مقدم و حویلی این
امر هم هر چه گفته شود از قبل اظهار بدیهیات خواهد بود
و البته برضای اولی البصار پوشیده نیت که مدینه
بیا که توبیت از بدو افتتاح تا گنبد باز تقضات و بیانات
الهیة طریقی برمدیج کمال افزوده که آواز شهادت گوشت
عموم و درود نیانها شده و این مسئله نیز چندان وضوح
نیست که قیاس آن از قطعی بی ضرورت و اندک وقت و فوج
بیش از این در محله کمال تحقیق این معنی ظاهر و ساری
اینکه توبیت در این محله کمال طریقی معانی بروز دارد
و دست راست که می شود که با سبب هیئت مدینه این مدینه
علاوه بر پیش کلاس ابتدائی شرع تشکیل کلاسهای
متوسط علی کرده و با وجود حصول همه قسم منابع دی
سال آنرا بطریق ناقص تاسیس نمود و مسائل حسب الزم
و صدور آن برآمده که نوافض آن در کلاس را تکمیل کرده
و علاوه با جابج و تصویب و توبیت جلبله معارف و کلاس
تو دیگر نیز بر آن بیفزاید و معلوم است که در صورت عدم
هزینه و مجبور خواهد بود که یکی از کلاسهای متوسط
نظر گرفته و همان طبقات ابتدائی گنجانند و با جزئی دقت
می شود که هر قدر تمسک این چند کلاس برای مدینه توبیت
مستحق استحکام است کلاماً مسائل است اغلال آن همانند
سایه قدر خواهد بود بنا بر همین عاده لایزال علاوه بر کسر
بود چه کلاسها عبارتند از که محتاج اصلاح است اولاً
یکصد تومان برای انجام این مقصود بر تاج سابق مدینه
اضافه می شود و بدیهی است که موفقیت چنین امر جلبل
بدون تعاون و مساعدت ارباب ثبات عالیة صورت نپذیرد
علیهذا هیئت مدینه مدینه توبیت را به هم که اعمال

در این راه و تعلیمه مفروضه حدود کرده باشد و بر اهلان
تربیت داده و با نهایت احکام اهل خراسان تربیت
تأسیسات تمام تقاضای نماید که ولو با عانت و بی نظریت
سرم این خیر کثیر موده و مرید و فقات الهیه را
و تقویت نیت جالب شود این مسئله را نیز برای
تذکره عرض می نمایم که مدینه مبارکه توبیت
از داخل و خرج مدینه مبارکه برای مزایا اطلاع الهیه را
آخر سال طبع نموده منتشر خواهد ساخت و در
خاتمه قول انصاف است جلت عظمه مولی توبیت
غیبه که در آن دیار اتحاد و استحکام روابط و توبیت
بر بیان و جهان و دل سکت می نمایم
خجسته : امید و استقامت که مدینه مبارکه
توبیت فرق العاده توفیق کند و این امر برای امر ظاهر
اسباب ظاهر لازم است لهذا مساعدت
مدینه این مدینه برعه واجب است و الله لا
یضیع اجر المحسن

ترقی امر الله تعالی

علاوه بر اینکه امتیای الهی شب و روز بتبلیغ امر الله
مشغولند انجبار هم می اختیار از تعلیم حضرت
نساء الله و بیانات حضرت عبدالجبار مخفی شدند
و در عبادت علیه و آدیه و جرائد بومیه حوزشان
همچو بدست شان می رسد انفاقاتی که جمع
باین امر عظیمه دارد به کمال عنایت جاریه منتشر
می نمایند و هدامن معجزات هذا الظهور الجدید
و لوحی مبارکی در این خصوص این آیات با تفصیل
امه الله مسرویت (شهرنار) نازل شده است
قوله الاملی :-
شکافو الله شهرنار مسرویت علیها بجه الله تعالی

3 ساز و دلشان ساز و نایها تا کنند عالمیان را همه شیدای بها ز آتش عشق تو هر ستر و چای سوزند دل ز غیر تو قوت نهند و بیاد تو دوزند دست و دل از همه جز به توبه بیاورند در طاعت و در راه و فایب تو بینند نعمت و هبت و خلعت و عیبت جوینند ز شمع هر نفسی نعمت و نایب تو گیرند شاگرد فضل تو گردند ز جای باقدوس که شد الطاف تو در تمام عالم و نفس خیزد زانی از افروز تو حاصل شد ظلمت جهل و معاندت تو زایل شد تو هر چه دانی و ندانی و در کمال شد روح تو آید ز لوح و قلب نازک شد گشت از خانه تو قلعه ای سر بهید شدتین لعل آتش و آفتاب جدید در صف عشق لقای تو می عهد داشت کرد عشاق خسته را همه سحر و شاد ساخت الهام تو شمع شسته را ده برت همه از بهر شایسته روحان بر کف تو جمله شیدای عشق تو لب و رخ تو شدند همه سودای آفتاب تو شدند شکر کاخ تو در دین تو پیش تو شد سر تو دانه چون کوی عید تو شد تن محمود ایاز و دلشاد تو شد از به لطف و کرم چاکر و دربان تو شد با وصال رخ تو هر دم و دستاورد خوشنای تو در نوا و سر از آمد چهارباخت باز از فضل آفتاب تو که از خورشید بر الجز و نیاز تو فریاد و ناله می آید	چهارباخت دنیا و دنیاخواه خود محفوظ و مصون بدار و مبالغه دنیا ع و عجز از دنیا خبری رسیده است که جناب آقایان زود قاف حسب امر مبارک از مساحت اقدس و مخزن شدند که به هندوستان مراجعت نمایند و کالت ابقی نجات الله قیام و نمایند . چهره اختر حضرت شاد الیه را تعین می نماید که بعد از الله در این دین الایام به خدمت آستان مبارک چه در شرق و چه در غرب موفق شدند و مصدر عنايات لا تخصی گشتند و در این مقام بقیه قصیده شان که در شماره سوم چاپ شده است درج میگردد : صلح بین ملل و وحدت بین انسان و تعالیم و تفریس بها کرد عیان گر و بارید چه شمع عهد لا یروسلوک تا که اندام آتش مملوک و ملوک قطع سازیم بر منحصه و شول شکوک فیض بخشیم بر هر کشور و اقلیم و بلوک همی آهوی فقر و در همه افطار و دیار نقشه نافه اسرار نهادیم ایشان تا که عالم همه اجابت اسرار کنیم و وحدت اهل بهار اسرار کنیم علم و عرفان عمل عسکر بر کنیم لشکر جهل و افکار جهان خدا کنیم نصرت دعوت و عطا انش پیمان داریم با نصیر شد در شت و درت نیران یابیم ای مبارک تو رسیده بنای بها نظم باغ اسری احباب بها
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آن زمان استفاضه نمایند و گونا گواهی که تشریف فرما بود
نیزول نمایند چو لکنند و شعر حقیقت بر زبان می تمدد
اشراق نماید هر چند برای امتدادند و در شش کوا
شوقان الهیه کی است حقیقت کواست نور واحد است
که بر ما یا اشراق نموده حال بعضی عاشق آفتابند و بعضی
اول در آیه مرینند تفتیه بر ما نذرند تفتیه آفتابند
داند در هر آنکه که باشد آفتاب می پستند اما
آنها یک آیه را می بینند این شاهد آفتاب دل آینه
دیگر می بینند مثلاً آنها یک مرآت موسی را دیدند
و مومن بودند چون آفتاب در مرآت موسی اشراق نمود
مصدق بر آت موسی شدند عاشق آفتاب بنمودند
از حقیقت مرآت موسی شدند لهذا محرم
مانندند و حال آنکه شمس حقیقت در مرآت موسی
اشراق بود و انوارش ظاهرتر با وجود این هنوز
بهود تسمک بر مرآت موسی بودند و مردم از ایشان جدا
نشدند

مناجات
خداوند میفرماید که ای پادشاهان آسمان
توبه و رجوع و عسالت تو آفتاب رحمت
برکشید و بر غایت یکبار الطاف شما را
است و فعلت را از کل جمیع عاقله فرمائی و کلام
بنظر حکمت منظر در آری ای پادشاهان الطاف
بی پایان شما را که نوره هدایت برافروز چشمه را روشن
کن دلها را سرور باری بخش نفس را روح تازه ده
و صیانت بدین احسان فرما اولیای غایت نورانی
تا با آن غدا در ظل عایت کل را متذکر جمیع را متقن
فرما تا جمیع اولادیک شمس شوند امواج یک دریا
گردند امثالیک شمع شوند اولیای شمع نور شوند
اولادیک نسیم با هفت آفتابند اولادیک اولاد آفتابان نمایند
دل را دهنه و بخشند و توانا

حقیقت حاصله شمس و خورشید و نور و روشنایی
واحد و جمیع ممکنات آشنای بنیادهای هر کس را
از او نصیبی پس مایاید انوارا بر شمس از هر آنکه
که باشد تعصبی نداشته باشیم زیرا که جمیع حقایق
است چون اشراقی را بعد از اینها باید حقایق انسانی
مستغنی از نور واحد گردند و آن اشراقی را بعد از جمیع
ایست که جمیع را جمع نماید این نیز چون انوار است شمس
حقیقت جمیع بشر را روشن نموده چشما را بیا کرده
گوشتها را شواغرنده نغمه را بر نغمه فرو نهاده نام
در نهایت الحقیقت ما شمس چه که کل مستغنی از نور شمس
هستم و انوار از شمس برکت یابد بلکه این نوع
شهرها را نه را نه شود این نور نیز بیا تمام گردان
تعمیلات بر طرف شود این عداوتها را نیز بر داشته
شود نور عبت الله تا بد کل با هم مرتبط گردیم تا جمیع
و ظریفه و حدت عالم انسانی را با شمس و در سایر عالم

Bahaism
in its
Social-Economic
Aspect





BAHAISM
IN ITS
Social-Economic Aspect

By HELEN CAMPBELL



BAHAI PUBLISHING SOCIETY
CHICAGO, ILL., U S. A.
1910

AUTHOR'S NOTE.

The article now reprinted in pamphlet form, appeared in the "Twentieth Century Magazine," for February, 1910, and has also been used as a lecture at various points. The writer has received so many inquiries as to the practical side of Bahaism that while the lack, severely felt, of full translation of the Book of Laws prevents a fuller presentation, yet the Tablets drawn upon contain the sum of the injunctions and will serve as primer till the full text may be had. Even the present form has stirred thought among social workers, labor organizations, etc., and it is hoped the fuller printing of the Book of Laws may soon be given us in English form.

HELEN CAMPBELL.

Boston, August 23, 1910.

BAHAISM : IN ITS SOCIAL-ECONOMIC ASPECTS.

BY HELEN CAMPBELL.

TO all peoples of the Western world, to a few of the Eastern, is coming the realization of a new sense, slowly developed through countless centuries, the nineteenth seeing its swift and visibly perfecting growth, and handing on the noble inheritance to the twentieth century. In its largest aspects it is the sociologic sense—only another name for what we today christen Social Consciousness. It is this new sense that is altering every phase of human life, the heart of its creed the brotherhood of humanity, the betterment of all humanity its solemn purpose. There can be no small surprise in the fact that the Orient, for ages benumbed and inert under its despotic governments and sharply defined castes, feels the stir, Young India, Young China, Young Turkey, rising with sudden demand for freedom, justice, human brotherhood, and the constitutional laws born of justice.

That there is also a Young Persia, struggling out from the same conditions seems less noteworthy and only a part of the general unrest; yet at some points it holds a deeper significance than anything as yet embodied in the demand for freedom. Conceived in the mind of a great founder of a great religious movement, it has long been either overlooked by the student of comparative religions, or regarded as too insignificant for special notice. Yet there it stands, worked out phase by phase, not finally it would appear until about 1866, through the writings of BAHÁ'U'LLAH, though the seeds of

it were deep in the mind of his predecessor, Mirza Ali Muhammed of Shiraz in Persia, better known as the Bab, born in 1819; this name in English being the Door or the Gate, since he opened the way to a truer faith and was prophet of the new day to come,—a John the Baptist, as it were, preparing the way for the new dispensation, and like the Baptist a martyr to the cause he proclaimed.

No more pathetic or tragic story can be found in any record of the struggle for human freedom than this one recorded many years ago by Count Gobineau, long French minister at the court of Persia and a well-known Orientalist of distinguished scholarship, in his book, still an authority, entitled *Les Religions et les Philosophes de l'Orient*. Martyred when his propaganda had scarcely begun, it remained for the Bab's appointed successor, Mirza Huseyn Ali, known since his acceptance of this trust at the age of nineteen as BAHÁ'O'LLAH, to give to the Bahai movement not only the forms of the new faith, but the economic system contained in the "Book of Laws," as yet only in small part translated from the Persian.

It appears that the essential features of this code came to him during long seclusion in Turkish Kurdistan, in a place named Barkahn, in the mountains and far from human habitation. From this retreat, known shortly as the chosen home of a great teacher and visited by hundreds of believers in the martyred Bab, as well as by learned men and pilgrims attracted by the beauty of his teachings no less than by his singular power over the hearts of all who talked with him, there went out tidings of a new law for all men; a series of laws, indeed, binding on every one who professed the faith, and to be preached to all mankind as the method most certain to ensure peace, progress and all forms of human betterment.

Despotisms breed revolters, but seldom economic thinkers. The economic sense, if it may be so called,—the power to comprehend and arrange social facts and problems under definite heads, to

draw from the past its lessons for the present hour and its promise for the future, is a part of today, its facts, deductions and figures never before in such orderly, practical array. But for BAHÁ'O'LLAH were no figures and few facts, save the great overmastering one of general oppression and misery for a people once nobly powerful, cultivated and refined, with wide knowledge and skill in all the arts, crafts and sciences; his own people in the country he passionately loved and longed to redeem.

In that mountain retreat, then, there came to him, and was worked out, this thought of a coming redemption for soul, mind and body. The great Peace movement of the present time, the desire and demand growing day by day for unity among the nations, is the chief plank in this economic platform, and already, wherever Bahai principles have made their sorely hampered way, many millions of the faith are now numbered in the Orient, drawn from every faith, caste set absolutely aside, and all peoples held as one common family born to dwell together in peace, mutual service and full trust.

It was this thought that had been with his predecessor, the young dreamer, Mirza Ali Muhammed, born in 1819, an instinctive and passionate believer in freedom, a fearless protestor against the despotism and fanaticism that ruled his country, a Luther in his denunciation of a blinding, bigoted faith, paying willingly, even joyfully, the penalty of martyrdom for his daring faith, his body hung against the castle wall, riddled with bullets, and cast to the dogs. His chosen successor, BAHÁ'O'LLAH, though held close prisoner at Acca, the penal city, and threatened many times with death, died finally of fever. The son of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, Abbas Effendi, who prefers to write himself as Abdul-Baha, or the Servant of God, has been like him also a prisoner at Acca, and this from his earliest childhood, preaching the same gospel and desiring the same ends, but very recently, with the

triumph of Young Turkey and its general amnesty for all political prisoners and exiles, being set free.

His own statement is, however, that while some essential features of the code have been allowed translation, the time is not yet fully ripe for the completion of the work as a whole, since certain necessary conditions for accurate work have heretofore been practically impossible.

The translator of the small portion of the book now in English, Mirza Ali Kuli Khan, now Persian charge d'affairs at Washington, states that for the best work in this direction a committee is needed composed of the finest Persian scholars and an equal number of the same order in English, to consult upon doubtful renderings and thus secure an absolutely faithful translation of the text. The present translator is an excellent linguist and speaks English admirably well, but none the less regards a translating committee as absolutely necessary for the best work. In the meantime, Orientalisms are dropped as far as possible, yet in the nature of things must in part remain, obscuring for some, it may be, the vital application of the work today.

This book, then, *Kitab-i Akdas*, "The Most Holy Book," holds the sum of all and every dream or plan for human betterment, from the Republic of Plato on through all the Utopias that men's minds have planned and men's hands sought to materialize. And while the present head of the Bahai movement states that the time is not fully ripe for carrying out all the injunctions given, he also affirms that it is so nearly at hand that all should study with deepest care the phases already included in the two small volumes* translated by Mirza Ali Kuli Khan, and made up from the "Tablets," the title given to the instructions, spiritual or practical, sent out to all Bahais, in whatever country they may be found.

First, then, the Book of Laws forbids further

*Entitled "Isbrakat" and "Tarazat."

religious warfare for any people, of any faith whatsoever; and second, that all people shall meet with joy as children of one God, Ruler and Father of all, and seek only and steadily the understanding which will mean harmony of life, thought and work, the abolition of all castes being made obligatory.

For the speedier bringing of such end, the third command calls for the adoption of a common language. "The kings or counsellors of the earth must consult together and appoint one of the existing languages or a new language"—Esperanto, it might be—"and instruct the children therein in all the schools of the world; and the same must be done with respect to writing also. In such case," reads the text, "the earth will be considered as one, for all peoples must become familiar with each other's writing and language; a common tongue essential to unity, and the child to know this common tongue even before he may know that of the land in which he is born."

The fourth command may on one side be questioned, since the end it desires to secure comes most often through necessary revolt against despotism and injustice, as in our own case in the War of the Revolution. It reads:

"In every country or government where any of this community reside, they must behave toward that government with faithfulness, trustfulness and truthfulness. So may the armaments of the world be changed into Peace, and corruption and conflict vanish from among men."

For the fifth, we find directions peculiarly applicable to Oriental nations. In the matter of habili-ment and cut of hair or beard and its dressing, men are permitted free choice, but are not to assume any uncouth dress or shape of beard that will bring ridicule from critical unbelievers.

Sixth. "All monks and priests must this day abandon solitude for open places, that is, the society of men, and engage in that which may profit both themselves and other men. Permission is con-

ferred on all to engage in marriage, that there may appear children to celebrate the praise of God, the Lord of the Seen and the Unseen."

"The first obligation of all Bahais is to strive by all means to bring up and instruct their children, male or female. The girls are like the boys. There is no difference; ignorance in both is censured, and in both stupidity is hateful."

"In reality, looked at with the eye of truth, the education and instruction of the girls is more useful than that of the boys; for in time these girls will become mothers and will have children. The first educator of the child, is it not the mother? Children are like green and tender branches; as they are cultivated, they grow and increase. If the cultivation is right they grow straight, and if it is wrong they grow crookedly, and until the end of their lives they advance upon the same path. It is thus then proved that if girls without education or instruction become mothers, it is they who are the cause of this loss, the ignorance, the stupidity, the want of education of many children. Strive then with all your souls to train and educate all children, above all your daughters. On this point no excuses can be accepted." "In the divine book of this cycle, instruction and education are not optional, they are obligatory. He who educates his child or any other's children, it is as though he educated one of My children. The most splendid fruit of the trees of knowledge is this exalted word: Ye are all fruits of one tree and leaves of one branch. Glory is not his who loves his own country, but glory is his who loves his kind. These are means for the prosperity of the world and the unification of nations. Blessed are those who attain and blessed are those who practice!"

Seventh. "It is not allowable to confess or declare one's sins and transgressions before any man, inasmuch as this has not been nor is conducive to securing God's forgiveness and pardon. At the same time, such confession before the creature leads to

one's humiliation and abasement, and God does not wish this humiliation of his servants."

Eighth. "All books of varying religions may be read by all, with no further barring out by any faith of books or beliefs not their own." This command at another point adds to itself another phase: "Read all books of all religions, that so the heart of each one may be added to your own heart in love and understanding."

Ninth. "All arts and sciences that are profitable and lead and conduce to the elevation of mankind, must be studied and practiced."

Tenth. "It is made incumbent on every one to engage in some one occupation, such as arts, crafts, trades and the like. This, the occupation, is identical with the worship of God. Waste no time in idleness and indolence, but occupy yourselves with that which will profit yourselves and others beside yourself. The most despised of men before God is he who sits and begs. Every soul who is occupied in an art or trade, this will be accounted an act of worship before God."

Eleventh. For every city, town, village, or even smaller community, is ordered the establishment of Houses of Justice. This would include not only all the ordinary forms of law and its administration, but all the measures of the wisest modern philanthropy or general social betterment, such as the children's court in cities and all places where education has not yet been brought to the point that will in time give to every child the sense of citizenship and his or her personal obligation and responsibility to fulfil its duties.

"Men and women must place a part of what they earn by trade, agriculture or other business, in charge of a trustworthy person, to be spent in the education and instruction of the children. That deposit must be invested in the education of the children under the advice of the trustees or members of the House of Justice. It is decreed that every father must educate his sons and daughters in learning and in writing. He who neglects that

which hath been commanded, if he is rich, it is incumbent on the trustees of the House of Justice to recover from him the amount required for the education of the children; otherwise, if the parent is not capable, the matter shall devolve on the House of Justice."

"Beyond a certain point all required wealth must pay one-nineteenth* over to the House of Justice, as a general fund for education, and for those who through sickness or accident or old age have become dependent." In other words, this includes a system of pensions, of the same general nature as the old age pension now adopted in England and Germany, and to come, we may hope, for the world of man as a whole.

Twelfth. "In the matter of lands, interest must be allowed on moneys loaned, for if none be allowed necessary business will be trammelled and obstructed. Few can at any time be found who would loan money to any one upon the principle of 'Ghargi-I-Iassan'—literally, 'a good loan'; that is, money advanced without interest and repaid at the pleasure of the borrower. Usury in all its forms of injustice and exaction, though outwardly wrapped in a garment of lawfulness, is abolished, and moderation and justice, love and good will, must and shall rule in all the affairs of men. Inheritance is limited to near relatives, and one-nineteenth* must go to the House of Justice for the purposes just mentioned. Complete regard and understanding of the place and importance of agriculture must be had, for Persia above all, where it still remains unhedged though greatly and nobly developed in other countries. In teaching and practice it must hold first place."

"All rulers of the earth, and especially the trustees of the Houses of Justice, must seek to establish union and harmony and the knowledge and love of God, the development of the world, the training of nations, the tranquillity and security

*One-nineteenth of one's income.

of all people of all lands, to be known by all as under Divine leading and protection. To this end, in each House of Justice the conditions of all whom it governs must be inquired into, with the deeds and affairs of everyone, that suitable protection and guidance may be given wherever needed. And these trustees must at all times study every means of advancement for the people, and bring about by all means that can be devised justice for all, equity, love and good will. The British people have both a King and a Parliament, and thus absolute despotism cannot be. The first duty of all rulers is to see that the people of each government shall find in the execution of its laws, security, affluence, welfare and tranquillity." Much else covering all methods and needs of men is in "the Book of Laws, in good time to be known of all.

"Ye are all leaves of one tree and drops in one sea," is repeated insistently in the comment on each law. Gambling, opium, intemperance, are absolutely forbidden, and the hygienic laws laid down are in line with the most advanced thought of to-day.

"To do justice it is obligatory that the Houses of Justice over all the earth should have knowledge of every ruler, every prophet in his time, and his book; and of the rulers, the limits of their kingdoms, the number of their soldiers, the price of all that is in their hands, even to their jewels. All towns must be cleansed and kept in neatness and cleanliness. Bathhouses must be built and bathing be a law for all men daily, wherever possible, since health and purity of mind are born of purity of body and habit."

"For the burial of the dead, it is well that they be buried in coffins of glass and the burial place be lined with cut stones. In such manner corruption does not reach and poison the living; but the dead must be bathed and wrapped in fine cloths of silk or cotton before they are laid in the coffin. If there is poverty that forbids such form of burial

then coffins of wood may be used and wrapping of woolen cloth in place of silk."

"By our laws four great barriers set between the nations by men are abolished, these barriers by which, when beliefs differed, war arose. Thus came the destroying men's lives, beheading men because their faith was not as that of him who would burn or behead. This was the first, and the second arose from that: the religious books of other religions were ordered to be burned and the man punished who read them. The third was the shunning of all other nations, and counting them as infidel and unclean; and thus came the fourth; which allowed, yea, ordered, the extermination of all such communities. All this shall pass and the nations be as one."

"To undertake journeys for the sake of visiting the tombs of the dead is not necessary. If those who have means and wealth should give to the House of Justice the amount which would otherwise be expended on such journeys, this would be acceptable and agreeable before God."

"Be not the cause of sorrow, how much less of sedition and strife,—ye are all leaves of one tree and drops of one sea."

"The rightly guided men of learning who engage in enlightening the people and are preserved from the temptations of inordinate desire,—such men are accounted of the stars of the Heaven of Knowledge before God, the Object of all the world. To respect them is obligatory. They are the flowing fountains, the shining stars, the fruits of the Blessed Tree, the signs of the Divine Power, and the Seas of the Eternal Wisdom. Blessed is he who adheres to them."

"Man should know his own self and know those things which lead to loftiness or to baseness, to shame or to honor, to affluence or to poverty. After man has realized his own being and become mature, then for him affluence or competence is needed. If his wealth is acquired through a craft or profession, it is approvable and worthy of praise to

men of wisdom, especially those who arise to train the world and beautify the souls of nations. These are the cup-bearers of the wine of knowledge and the guides to the ideal path. They direct the people of the whole world into the right path and instruct them in that which is conducive to the elevation and progress of being.

"The followers of Sincerity and Faithfulness must consort with all the peoples of the world with joy, for free association or intercourse is always conducive to union and harmony, and union and harmony are the cause of the order of the world and the life of nations. . . . Forbearance and Benevolence are the two lights for the darkness of the world and the two teachers to lead nations to knowledge. Blessed are those who attain thereto.

"The people of Baha' must respect possessors of talent. They must not refuse to discharge the due reward of any one. To acquire knowledge is incumbent upon all. . . . In this day the mysteries of this earth are unfolded and visible before the eyes, and the pages of swiftly appearing newspapers are indeed the mirror of the world. They display the doings and actions of the different nations; they both illustrate them and cause them to be heard. Newspapers are as a mirror which is endowed with hearing, sight and speech. They are a wonderful phenomenon and a great matter. But it behooveth the writers, editors, et al., therefore to be sanctified from the prejudices of egotism and desire and to be adorned with the ornament of Equity and Justice."

"The real treasury of man is his knowledge. . . . To acquire knowledge is incumbent upon all, but of those sciences which may profit the people of the earth, and not such sciences as begin in mere words and end in mere words."

Most significant of all is the special bearing of the Laws on the future of the women of the Orient. Equality of the sexes is insisted upon, though at first Oriental women may shrink from the new order and the responsibilities it involves. But the moth-

ers of the race must no longer "be childish, undeveloped slaves, or, when come to maturity, be fettered by unending restrictions which render development impossible, and insure an utterly false relation between men and women.

All this is in the nature of a dynamite bomb in countries which have had no recognition of woman's real place. In and through this new gospel of freedom and equality of opportunity, they are to come into a life which educates every faculty for service, making women and men alike citizens and co-workers in a world republic nobler even than Plato's majestic vision. Education is for each alike, allowing for any necessary divergences.

Work, education, science, art, literature, are all exalted,—full place for each in individual and national life; and the final word, for all of BAHÁ' O'LLAH'S program holds the sum of all faiths that have lived, "Let him not glory who loves his own country, but let him glory who loves the whole world. May East and West delight in one another as lovers, and North and South embrace each other in closest affection."

In Rangoon, a year ago, a trained and keen student of sociologic questions found in a Bahai meeting representatives of six of the world's great religions; men of mature age, doctors, lawyers, government employes and others brought up as strictest Hindoos, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, and Christians of varying sects, but conferring together in perfect harmony.

Co-operative stores on English lines are established in Bombay, Port Said, Rangoon and Alexandria. Others are contemplated, and so far as despotic governments admit, the movement for co-operation, which now includes many hundred thousand, seeks in all ways to carry out the principles already established and proven, working together in entire harmony to that end.

As an illustration of their methods, two incidents may be given which came under the personal observation of the sociologic student already men-

tioned. Both occurred at a meeting of the council of the House of Justice for Bombay, a council of nineteen persons, chiefly Mohammedans and Zoroastrians. A poor Zoroastrian Bahai came and told the members that affairs had been going very badly with him, and that he was on the point of failure. The council deliberated and decided that the different members should give a part of their time each day to helping him in his shop, lay in a new stock of goods, and give pecuniary help if necessary. This was done and soon the man was on his feet again, an example that they practice the fraternity they preach.

This was simply human kindness at its best; but the same evening brought up a much more complicated case.

"A Mohammedan Bahai had arrived in a state of much perplexity. He had just received from a Mohammedan friend lottery tickets to dispose of, the lottery being for some Mohammedan charity. 'I don't know what to do with them,' the man said. 'In the Book of Laws, BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH has strongly forbidden gambling, but I am not sure whether a lottery would come under the head of gambling or not. If I accept and distribute these lottery tickets, I may be breaking one of the laws. On the other hand, if I refuse them, I shall probably make this friend of mine, who is an influential Mohammedan, my bitter enemy.'

"The nineteen members of the House of Justice deliberated together as to what should be done. Finally a Zoroastrian member saw a way out of the difficulty, and he proposed that each one of the Bahais should take a ticket and then return them with the hundred rupees, writing that they did not care to take a chance in a lottery, but they were very glad to help a Mohammedan charity.

"Here were two great results of Bahai teaching; gambling, one of the most prevalent vices of the East, being looked upon with aversion, and the feeling of animosity and hatred of Zoroastrians for Mohammedans, which has endured for many cen-

turies, becoming so modified that they were glad to help a Mohammedan charity."

Though Christianity holds all the principles at heart of any social progress, it does not define a program of scientific reform. The Bahai faith develops such a program, in line with the conclusions of advanced economic science, and requires of its followers the practical fulfilment of these economic laws as religious observances and obligations. One might even say that it would be quite possible to believe whole-heartedly and steadily in Christianity, without the slightest inconsistency, yet *do* Bahaiism with immeasurable advantage to the world. It is certain that the one would never interfere with the other, much less do away with any real factor in the progress of human kind, whether in soul, mind or body. But no Bahai would venture to affirm that the last word has been spoken and will remain altered and unalterable in the form now given in the Book of Laws. On the contrary, as progress is the eternal law, each fresh development will call for new statements and fresh methods born of deeper comprehension, until the day dawns in which no law save the Law of Love will be needed by or for any child of man.

EINE NEUE RELIGION: DER BAHAIISMUS.

Dokumente des Fortschritts, Internationale Revue,
I Heft, I Jahr, Vorlegt von Georg
Reimer, Berlin.

ARE religious ideas stereotyped and persistently unchanging, while round about Thought and Being grow and flow, or do they also have a part in the development of the spiritual life in man; in fewer words, is there any "Progress of Religion?" Apparently not, if one dares to believe Pius IX in his late encyclical on Modernism as the most sorrowful wandering from the path the Church has known. The above question must be asked, if the one necessary distinction between religion and the Church, religious thought and dogma and culture be examined, and if one dares believe in Bahaiism, which in Orient and Occident alike daily increases its adherents.

This new movement had its beginning some fifty years ago in Persia. Today it reckons itself as the sum and end of all religions, the natural outcome, also, of all those formerly believed. In a word, it will simply realize Religion in perfect purity and simplicity, freed from all oppressive dogmas and outgrown rites.

It is certain that Christians, Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists, Persians, Hindus, et al., are united, and equally Freethinkers, who, in the best sense of the word, are often much more religious than the formal churchmen; their faith in the good, the true and the beautiful uniting them all in the common

ideal which is followed without the necessity of mutual communication, or that of adopting the faith of others. Here is included the main idea of Bahaism, which it appears well deserves place in the *Dokumente des Fortschritts*.

BAHA'O'LLAH, whom the Bahais hold to be the noblest manifestation of God, the successor of Moses, Buddha, Zoroaster, Jesus and Mohammed, died at St. Jean d'Acre in 1892, leaving behind him numerous writings, in which are laid down the principles of the new world religion. BAHA'O'LLAH acknowledged the worth of all former religions. He desired all men to be converted to a moral and religious progress in the spirit of Unity and Peace. There should be no more rites, no clergy or dogmas. The knowledge of God and the brotherhood of man are the principal consideration, and through the manifestation of the prophecies, enlightened reason should be our guide. So the till now unsurmountable difficulties piled about all religions must fall and the prejudices of race and caste that for ages have hindered progress vanish away.

These aspirations, fairy-tale like, and visionary as they appear, have now in fact borne practical results; first of all in Persia, from whence the movement proceeded. Here we observe for now a number of years, a moral and a social development in which the influence of the new idea is dominant, a fact which cannot be denied. The people have shaken off the spirit of fanaticism and are filled with the most earnest wish to free themselves from the guardianship of the priests, which has been over them for hundreds of years. A liberal sovereign has allowed a constitution to be framed, so that this land with its famous past has now a shining future to anticipate.

In India, Brahmins, Hindus, Sikhs, Parsées, Druses, and followers of the Grand Llama have dismissed the idea of caste restrictions and found in Bahaism the working means toward unity, not only with one another but with Christians and Mus-

salmen. The natives who join Bahaist associations will no longer be despised by Europeans.

In Russia from Batun to Samarcand, from Moscow to Taschkent, there are numerous groups in which orthodox Christians equally with Moham-medans, find themselves, especially sorrowful circumstances binding them together, and in some towns, as for example in Eshkabad, they are a most important factor in the public order and well being. In Egypt and Turkey as well, where they encounter the problem of propitiating fanaticism, and using worldly wisdom in reaching the people, the Bahais have proven themselves the truest and most peaceful subjects. In the different towns of Syria, in which they live in great numbers, the judges for twenty years do not remember the least personal commerciale dissension to have arisen among them.

In Europe and America also, the Bahais have had an analogous experience. In the most important cities groups have been formed from day to day becoming more numerous, recruited from all orders of people and all religions. As in the Orient, they are accustomed on fixed days to come together for the reading and commenting upon the works of BAHÁ'O'LLAH. Only a few learned men formerly knew these works in manuscripts, deciphering them in the Library at St. Petersburg, or in the British Museum. Today they are translated into French and English and form the basis of a new social ethics, which enchant whoever may study their meaning. In most countries it is a chosen group or center composed of at least nine members, who are occupied with all questions that have special interest for the community. These groups propose a union between the Oriental and the Western faiths, which, on account of the differences in surroundings and no less in the sharp distinctions of the social organization, has not yet been brought about.

BAHÁ'O'LLAH has said: "Ye are all leaves of the same tree and drops in the same sea." He did not

teach that religions compel a binding to the church. He wished them to develop and practice all the arts and crafts of daily life. The eternal striving of the spirit of man to unveil the secret of the unknown God is based by him upon a higher principle of morals. Through it mankind on the common ground of their highest aspirations and strivings at last unite.



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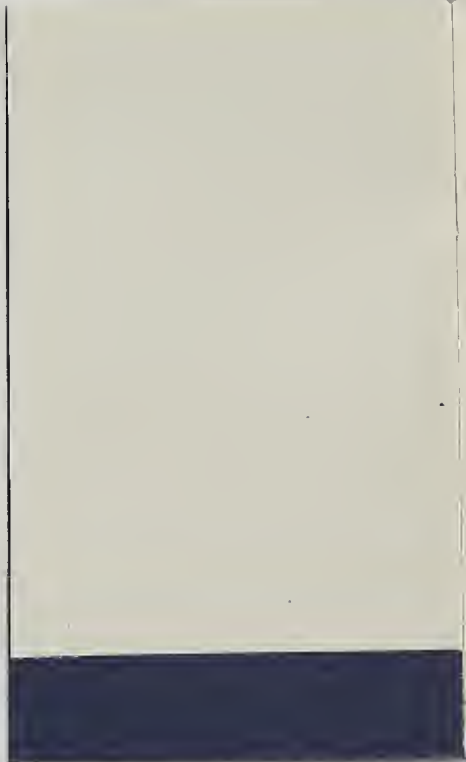


THE BAHAI MOVEMENT

A TEACHING OF PEACE

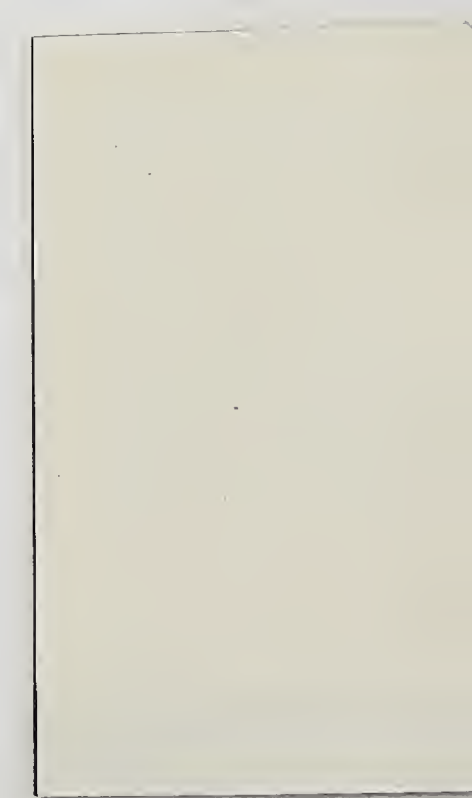
Address made before the
Third National Peace Congress
Baltimore, Maryland, U. S. A.
Saturday, May 6, 1911

BY



WORDS OF BAHÁ'O'LLAH

"We desire but the good of the world, and the happiness of the nations. . . . That all nations should become one in faith, and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened. . . . These fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away and the Great Peace shall come. . . . Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind."



THE BAHAI MOVEMENT

Over half a century ago, before the attention of Western thinkers had to any degrees been directed toward the problem of Universal Peace, there was born in the Orient a movement for peace and brotherhood, the call of which is now being heard in the Occident.

The Bahai Movement has for its object not only international conciliation, as considered from the political and economic view points, but essentially the unification of the people of all races and religions along spiritual lines.

Religious and racial hatred have been the chief cause of warfare. Through the removal of these prejudices the Followers of this Movement believe that Peace will be established amongst the Nations. Through it thousands of Christians, Moslems, Jews, Zoroastrians, Hindoos, and Buddhists, of every race and nationality, are being firmly united in the universal brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God.

In the month of May, 1844, there arose in Persia a teacher calling himself The Bab, who proclaimed himself to be the forerunner of "He Whom God would manifest." One who would short'y appear with spiritual wisdom and power, through whose teaching would be established the Divine Kingdom of Peace upon earth. The ministry of The Bab lasted six years, and was followed by his martyrdom, as well as the martyrdom of thousands of his followers, which was brought about by the Mohammedan clergy upon the charge of heresy.

Shortly after the death of The Bab, "The Promised One," whose coming He had fore-

told, appeared in the person of Baha'o'llah. Under the most severe persecution Baha'o'llah, together with some of His followers, was exiled to Turkey in Asia, then to Turkey in Europe, and later on in 1868 was sent to the town of Akka, a penal colony situated on the Mediterranean, just north of Mt. Carmel, in Syria. Here in Akka He lived and taught until He passed out of this mortal world in the year 1892. Though He gave His teachings and spiritual instructions, yet during His ministry His cause was not explained nor established in the world in general. To this end Baha'o'llah commanded His followers upon His departure to turn their faces toward His son Abdul-Baha as their spiritual guide, the explainer of His teachings, the one who would establish His cause in the world, the one upon whose shoulders His mantle would fall.

Abdul-Baha, also known as Abbas Effendi, from 1868 until 1908, because of His teaching, was held a State prisoner in the town of Akka. At present He is in Egypt and there is a possibility that He may visit this country of America. He makes but one claim for Himself, that of service in the Path of God. His name, Abdul-Baha Abbas, means "Abbas the servant of God." He is the spiritual leader of the Bahais, and is their example to be followed in teaching this great faith in the world. He is making the spiritual life of Baha'o'llah possible, and bringing it within the reach of the people.

While there have been three teachers in this cause, Baha'o'llah is the central figure, about whom the other two revolve. It is from His name, Baha, that the Movement takes its name. "The Bab" and His Movement were but introductory to, while Abdul-Baha and His work are explanatory of, the Bahai Movement.

This religious teaching is brief and simple. Each of the founders of the great religious systems of the world is looked upon as having been inspired by the one spirit of truth, which is God. The form and letter of the teachings of these various leaders differ because of the differing conditions of humanity to which they ministered, but in spirit each taught the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. In the various religions the fundamental truths are one and the same.

Moreover each of the prophets taught of the coming of a great teacher, and of the establishment of the Universal Religion. The Jews await the coming of their Messiah, the Christians the coming of the Christ, the Moslems the coming of the Mahdi, the Buddhists the coming of the 5th Buddha, the Zoroastrians the coming of Shah Bahram, and the Hindus the return of Krishna.

The Bahais teach that the spirit of these promised teachers is one and the same, and they believe that in Baha'o'llah was manifested *again* this one spirit of truth, The Word of God. Therefore in His mission and teaching He has accomplished the hopes of the peoples of all religions. They believe that He was spiritually endowed with the wisdom and understanding necessary to found a new form of religion, applicable to the needs of this day, one which will embrace within its fold people of all races and religions, uniting them in one brotherhood.

The Bahai teaching is in no sense an eclectic philosophy. It is not a theology, nor does it put forward doctrine or dogma. *It is essentially a religious faith.* It seeks to change man's nature not by enforcing upon him laws from without, but by developing the higher nature of the individual from within.

Amongst the Moslems the Bahai teaching

has had a phenomenal spread. The several recent progressive changes in the Islamic world in Persia have only been made possible through the introduction into that country of such progressive thought, and freedom from the superstitions of the past, as the Bahai Movement stands for and takes with it wherever it goes. The progressive Moslem finds the Bahai teaching to be quite in accord with the spirit of the Koran and he accepts it as a new testament added thereto.

In like manner the Jew sees in this movement the fulfilment of the hope of the Milennial age held out to him in his Bible and realizing this he finds himself at one with the Moslem and the Christian.

In going farther into the Orient one finds staunch Bahais amongst the remnant of the Ancient Zoroasterian faith. These received this message and believed its principles because in their ancient Holy literature they find hidden away its simple truths.

Thinking Hindus are also being reached by the Bahai thought and, through its positive principles of action and service in bettering humanity, they are working to free themselves from superstition and caste. Thus they are in sympathy with the progress of the world along material and spiritual lines together, whereas formerly their progress was limited because of the negative phase in which Hinduism has been during so many centuries.

The enlightened believer in Gautama, The Buddha, finds in his own teaching the promise of Peace and universal brotherhood on earth which makes it easy for him to detect and recognize the fulfilment of the same in the Bahai Movement. To the Buddhist, therefore, the idea of this movement, for the readjustment of earthly conditions and the establishment of peace, is a welcome one.

Of all people, none have taken up the Bahai teaching with more fervor than those scattered here and there, where this message has reached, throughout Christendom. To them it fulfils and accomplishes the hopes of Christianity and they are taking hold of the teaching as a practical power in daily life. They are applying its principles and are holding out a helping hand to their co-workers in various parts of the Orient. Through this spirit of oneness with the Orientals a bond between the East and the West is established, a bond which will strengthen and grow until all peoples, Occidental and Oriental, will be as one people—until the great universal civilization, which is so rapidly casting its signs before it, shall stand accomplished.

The Bahais have no form of admission to their ranks, nor have they any enrolled membership. They do not form a sect. Those who sympathize with their aims they consider as friends and co-workers. As people work with them, they gradually imbibe the spirit and life inspiring the body of workers until they stand forth as exponents of this new faith. The Bahais have no outward institutions as barriers to differentiate nor to separate them from other people.

Some of the ordinances of this teaching touch upon the following subjects:

RELIGIOUS UNITY: All men are free to believe and to worship as they will, but they are exhorted to unite in faith, for only through spiritual unity will mankind attain the highest development.

TOLERANCE: The Bahais should not separate themselves from people who are not of their belief, nor should they denounce nor antagonize those holding views other than their own. They should mingle freely with all

people and show forth their faith through love and service and to their fellow men.

PEACE: Warfare should be abolished and international questions should be settled by arbitration. In order to facilitate international communication, one language should be chosen from those already existing, or one devised for that purpose.

GOVERNMENT: Representative legislation is most conducive to the welfare of the people. The Bahais should be loyal and law abiding citizens in whatever country they may dwell. They should not glory in that they love their country, but in that they love their kind.

WORSHIP: Prayer supplemented by a pure and useful life in this world form the elements of true worship. Faith without works is not acceptable. Every one should have an occupation which conduces to the welfare of humanity, the diligent pursuance of which is in itself an act of worship.

MARRIAGE: Celibacy and asceticism are discouraged. Man should marry and create a family and live in the world. Monogamy is taught.

RESISTANCE: Harshness should be met with gentleness and hatred with love. With these weapons the Bahais will overcome all opposition.

THE CHURCH: In this Cause there is no priesthood, apart from the laity. Each one who receives the spirit should share it with those whom he meets in daily life. All are teachers, Teaching is given without money and without price.

RELIGIOUS GOVERNMENT: "The House of Justice," a central assembly, the mem-

bers of which are selected by general vote, is to preside over the affairs of the Bahai world. Its work has to do with charitable and educational matters and the general welfare of the people.

TEMPERANCE: In all matters moderation is to be observed. Man should not use intoxicating liquors as a beverage. The taking of opium and kindred drug habits are most emphatically denounced, and gaming is also forbidden. The use of tobacco is discouraged.

Admonitions forbidding mendicity, slavery, cruelty to animals, and various offences, together with rules regarding hygiene, education of both sexes and other matters need not here be mentioned, as they are already provided by Western civilization, though in the Orient the need for these is very great.

The effect of these ordinances cannot be overestimated. In the Orient, where religion is a far more potent factor in every-day life than it is here in the West, religious exhortations and injunctions have inestimable weight in the lives of the masses of the people.

I have made a study of the Bahai Movement, and would like to add a few words of personal testimony regarding what I have seen amongst the Bahais in many parts of the world.

In Persia, where this movement had its birth, I found that the Bahais had not only overcome the hatred and antipathy which has for centuries existed between Christian, Jew, Zoroastrian and Moslem, but through the uniting spirit of their teaching this previously existing enmity had been replaced by a most binding fraternal spirit. In the Bahai Assemblies all differences of the past had been superseded by the strongest of ties. In that country these people have suffered much because of the fanaticism of those surrounding

them. Thousands of their members have in the past been massacred, while in the present they are under many difficulties. As recently as 1901 over one hundred and seventy Bahais were massacred in one town by the Moslems.

In Southern Russia and in Turkistan I have visited Assemblies of Bahais. In those territories the movement is protected by the Russian Government, for it is understood that the Bahais stand for Peace and are in no way connected with the many revolutionary movements which continually keep those countries in a state of unrest.

In Egypt and Syria, as well as Turkey, I have met groups of Bahais working along progressive lines, but in those countries, as well as in Persia, the outward progress of the work is not as great as the unseen progress. This is due to the prejudice and persecution by the Moslems which often leads to bloodshed.

In India the principal center of the Bahais is in Bombay. There I found many Parsees or Zoroasterians taking part in the work. In Calcutta, Baroda, Allahabad, Agra, Lahore, Poona and other cities, there are assemblies, and in these meetings Christians, Hindus and Moslems mingle as brothers.

In Burma there is a large Buddhist element amongst the Bahais. Last year I spent some time travelling in that country, and was most hospitably received by the Bahais in several towns and cities. In Japan I found the Bahai teaching to be attracting some attention, and in China, too, the movement to have a beginning. Here in these United States, as well as in Great Britain and Europe, I have visited many assemblies and found the work progressing amongst people of all classes and of varying religious thought. Being essentially a spiritual movement this Teaching appeals

alike to the enlightened and to the uncultured as it does to people of various religions, races and nationalities.

Notwithstanding the previous attitude of the religionist, which is usually antagonistic to beliefs other than his own, the moment he becomes imbued with the spirit of the Bahais he no longer limits his interest to the mental confines to which he has been accustomed. He becomes a citizen of the world, freed from National religious and racial prejudices. This is noticeable in the Occidental Bahai, while in the Oriental Bahai it is many times more so, because of the surrounding background of ignorance, superstition and fanaticism against which he stands out emancipated in bold relief.

One who has lived in the Orient and known the Oriental people, will at once recognize the importance of the religious factor in bringing about Universal Peace. It is the religious differences between the Oriental and Occidental which have created the great chasm between Eastern and Western thought, manners and customs. There being no religious thought *in common* between the East and West, there is no ground upon which their respective peoples can meet, hence the necessity for a common religion which only can solve the problem. The Bahai Movement is working directly to bring about confidence, understanding and unity between the Oriental and the Occidental peoples. Baha'o'llah, like all the world movers, was far ahead of His time. A Universal Religion, International Arbitration, Universal Peace, a Universal Language, Universal Suffrage, in fact a Universal Civilization, with all of its universal institutions, was unthought of by the world when He, over half a century ago first announced these principles as divine commands. Now the

world in general is awaking to the necessity for those very institutions for which thousands of Bahais have suffered persecution and martyrdom.

Progress is the resounding chord of this day. Progress in religion is needed more than progress in anything else. The world is now ready for a live and progressive Faith of Brotherly Love, which is broad enough to take in every race and every people; a Faith which will lead and create progressive thought and progressive institutions; a Faith which will actually produce a change in men's natures, developing within their souls divine virtues; a religion which does not destroy, but which fulfils the religions of the past; a religion free from dogma, applicable to all races and conditions, the unique object of which is Peace and the Universal Civilization. Such a faith is the Bahai Teaching.

GREETING

The Third Annual Convention of The Bahais of America, held in Chicago, Illinois, sends greetings to the Third National Peace Congress, assembled in Baltimore, Maryland, with the prayer that wisdom may advance, that all may be illumined, that there be no more war and strife, that reconciliation and peace be established, that the peoples of all religions and races be united, that the countries of this earth become as one land, and that all humanity may abide in Unity and in Peace.

May 4, 1911.

Information regarding the teachings, the work, and the publications of the Bahai Cause, together with copies of this pamphlet, singly or in quantities for distribution, will be furnished upon application to one of the following centers:

THE BAHAI ASSEMBLY OF CHICAGO,
P. O. Box 283. Chicago, Ill.

THE BAHAI ASSEMBLY OF NEW YORK,
226 West 58th St., New York City.

THE BAHAI ASSEMBLY OF WASHINGTON,
P. O. Box 192. Washington, D. C.

*Allan
506 Duquesne Ave
Edgewood Park
Pittsburgh Pa.*

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*Copy of a letter to a Bahai
residing in Munich, Germany.*

DEAR SPIRITUAL BROTHER:

The question which came to your mind upon hearing of the coming of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, the "Promised One," and of the great movement which He founded, is one which arises in the minds of many, and is one which the Bahai teachers are daily asked, "What has He to give that has not already been given to the world through Christ and the Prophets?"

If the spirit and aim of The Revelation of BAHÁ'O'LLAH could be summed up and expressed by one word, it would be the word *Unity*. BAHÁ'O'LLAH came into the world for the spiritual unification of all peoples. He has brought to the world the *Peace of GOD*, and has established the Heavenly Kingdom, for which the people of all religions have looked during these many centuries past. This is His spiritual mission. Those of Christ and the Prophets were as preliminary steps to lead the world to this the greatest of all Revelations.

Since the Revelation of BAHÁ'O'LLAH is the common goal or event toward which all revelation has pointed, its foundations lie in each of the religions of the world. It is constructive, not destructive. Whatever faith a soul may hold, he will find the Bahai teaching to be in accord with, and at the same time will see that in this teaching is the fulfillment of the prophecies of his own religion.

Christians accept BAHÁ'O'LLAH as the "Father" whose coming Christ foretold; Jews accept Him as their "Messiah" (who in His First Coming they

now realize they rejected); the followers of Islam accept Him as the "One" whose coming their Prophet foretold; and so on, by the followers of the various other religions He is recognized and accepted as the "One" expected to appear and establish the Universal Divine Dispensation—the Kingdom of GOD on earth.

It is hardly necessary to enter into other than a general view of the matter to show that all religions teach of the coming of the Lord in the latter days. But it is of special interest to us in Christian countries to understand the relation between Christ and BAHÁ'O'LLAH. Upon one hand to understand that Christ and His Dispensation made the way for the coming of the Father and of the establishment of His Kingdom, and upon the other hand to see how BAHÁ'O'LLAH has fulfilled prophecies and conditions, thus perfecting and completing GOD'S design for the salvation (spiritualization) of the whole world, wherein we find realized the answer to the prayer of the faithful souls of the past nineteen hundred years "Thy Kingdom come *on earth* as it is in Heaven."

The Divine plan for the spiritualization of the world is explained in its entirety in the parable of the "householder which planted a vineyard"—Matt. 21: 33-41—wherein the "householder" is symbolic of GOD, the creator of the world. The "vineyard" symbolizes the people of the world, while the "husbandmen" are the leaders of the people. His "servants" represent the Prophets sent by the Lord to call the people of the world to righteousness and divine obedience, all of whom suffered, and were rejected by man. His "Son" is Jesus, the Christ, whose teaching was refused by the world which crucified Him. "When the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh" refers to the coming of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, while "He will miserably destroy those wicked men

and will let out His vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render Him the fruits in their seasons" is prophetic of the great outpouring of Divine Grace through this Latter-Day Revelation which is so great as to overcome and destroy the great power of evil (spiritual ignorance) which is dominating humanity. This Day is the time of the world's turning from humanity to divinity. BAHÁ'O'LLAH has brought to the world a new Day, for with His coming, old conditions passed away and a new Spiritual Dispensation was ushered into existence.

Since the birth of the Bahai Movement, in May, 1844, a spiritual awakening, parallel to that of the physical world in the spring of the year, has passed over mankind, quickening and inspiring souls to turn to GOD. This is manifestly obvious in the almost universal quest for Truth which has so characterized this past century. This condition has been caused by the coming of the Promised One. Demand and supply go together in spiritual matters as they do in affairs on the natural plane. This is seen very clearly as we look at the present day tendency toward union and fraternity between various religious sects and cults. This indicates a certain spiritual need or demand for unity of faith and divine laws, while on the other hand we have the spiritual supply to this demand in the solution of the problem of religious unity which BAHÁ'O'LLAH gives to the world. GOD has manifested Himself to the world through BAHÁ'O'LLAH in order to create Spiritual Unity and harmony among the people. This is the foundation of all real or eternal happiness both in this world and in those to come. This is what the Bahai Teaching offers to the world. The law of equity, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," and the Christ law of Mercy and Love, have for centuries been known to man, but the power to enable the world (all human-

kind) to live according to the Christ law has only been given to all humanity through BAHÁ'O'LLAH.

When GOD came to the world manifesting Himself as the "Son," Jesus Christ, the world rejected Him, "but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on His Name." To those individual souls He gave His Peace, but not to *the world*, because the world did not receive Him. This He announced when He said: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." Now BAHÁ'O'LLAH has brought that peace to the world. He is "The-Prince-of-Peace" who has come to the world and has established Peace on Earth. How clearly Isaiah the Prophet saw the coming of the Prince of Peace, the coming of the Lord Manifesting Himself as the Father, when he wrote, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

How thankful we should all be that GOD in His Mercy has brought us into the knowledge of this Great Truth, and is allowing us to serve Him in this, the Greatest of all Days.

Faithfully your brother,

In His Holy Cause,

CHARLES MASON REMEY

P. O. Box 192

Washington, D. C., January 27, 1907.





A vertical decorative border on the right side of the page. It features a parrot with green, yellow, and red plumage at the top, perched on a blue and white floral motif. Below the parrot is a fleur-de-lis, and at the bottom is a small white bird. The border is decorated with intricate scrollwork and floral patterns in blue, green, and gold.

ILLUSTRATED

Persian - American

EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY

BROTHERHOOD EDUCATION INTERCOMMUNICATION
COMMERCE

CONTENTS

of the

By

\$1 a year

Ten cents a copy



Principles of the Persian-American Educational Society.

PRIMARY OBJECT.

1. The primary object of the Persian-American Educational Society is to provide for the education of the youth of Persia, through the cooperation of philanthropic Americans. Out of this movement has grown a work of greater scope, that of furnishing a means of intercommunication between Persia and the United States, and finally between the East and the West. As the Society is nonsectarian, has no paid officers, and serves no selfish purpose, it is particularly fitted to occupy the important place in the world's affairs suggested by the foregoing.

EDUCATIONAL WORK.

2. The educational work of the Society is being conducted, its Persian connection being the School of Tarbiat in Teheran, and a few other schools for girls and boys already established. The purpose is to assist further other schools in different parts of the country as they may be established, afterward turning attention to other Eastern countries.

SCHOLARSHIPS.

3. Scholarships may be taken at the rate of \$18 yearly, this amount paying the expenses of a student. The Society also supplies to Persian schools competent American teachers and furnishes text-books, at actual cost, or without expense to the Persian schools applying for this assistance. Any person supporting a student will be regarded as an active member of the Society.

EDUCATION FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

4. Boys and girls are now being educated under the direction of the Society. Subscribers are furnished with a photograph of the child for whose education they are paying, and may correspond with the scholar if they so desire. Should they take any further interest in the scholar, such as providing for an American training after the completion of the school course in Persia, this Society will lend its aid as desired.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS.

5. Associate members will be received, the dues being \$1 annually. Such members will receive the monthly illustrated bulletin of the Society, the Secretary's report, and other printed matter which may be issued from time to time.

COMMERCE.

6. The Society is now in a strong position to assist in bringing together the merchants and manufacturers of Persia and the United States for the expansion of commerce and trade between the two countries.

BRANCH SOCIETIES.

7. Branch societies may be formed in any city, each branch having its own officers, where there are nine active members. This enables those interested to cooperate actively and intelligently with this great educational work.

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES.

8. Books of all descriptions, such as text-books, histories, scientific works, monthly and weekly magazines, are needed to be sent to Persia for the English public libraries connected with the schools.

BUSINESS OF THE SOCIETY.

9. The direction of the Society is in the hands of the active members, each of whom is entitled to a vote at elections. The constitution provides for a Board of Directors, comprising the officers and representatives from the branch societies.

PUBLIC COOPERATION.

10. The Society appeals to public spirited men and women generally for support. All funds received from active memberships go directly toward the payment of scholarships. Postage, printing and other running expenses are met from the dues of associate members and special contributions. All the officers serve without any compensation whatever.

LARGER FIELD.

11. The larger field of usefulness which has presented itself for the Society can only be occupied in proportion to the number that help. Correspondence is invited, and your help and cooperation are solicited.



JOSEPH H. HANNEN,
SECRETARY
PERSIAN-AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY.

HISTORY AND PROGRESS OF THE PERSIAN-AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY.

ORIGIN OF THE SOCIETY.

1. The Persian-American Educational Society had its inception in a small gathering of some of the friends of that ancient empire, held at 1800 Belmont Road, Washington, D. C., which has since become known as the headquarters of the Society. This meeting took place October 30, 1902. During the summer and early autumn of that year, Mr. Sydney Sprague, an American, long time resident in London and afterward in the Orient, visited his native land. He delivered a number of speeches in regard to his work in the Tarbiat School in Teheran, of which he was a teacher, and later the Superintendent. This School, established some fifteen years ago by a few broad-minded and philanthropic Persians, had been conducted under their patronage. It provided a means of education along more modern lines, non-sectarian, and either at a nominal tuition or entirely free to those children whose parents were unable to pay. While Mr. Sprague was lecturing in Chicago in August of that year, he met Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, of Persia, who is now a resident of Washington, D. C. While discussing together the work of the Tarbiat School, Mirza Sohrab suggested the formation of a Society through which educational advantages of America might be systematically introduced into Persia. Upon his return to Washington, he invited a number of American friends to his office and presented to them the idea of the organization of the Persian-American Educational Society. This was received enthusiastically by all present. Many became interested in providing means to help the Tarbiat School permanently and effectively. They realized the need of concerted action and desired to render assistance not only temporarily but in a constructive manner, not alone to a few students, but through them to the cause of liberty in a far-off land. The result of this meeting was the appointment of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Fred. J. Woodward, and Joseph H. Hannen as a committee to draft a Constitution for the Society to be formed. This committee in turn invited Mrs. Claudia S. Coles and Louis G. Gregory to collaborate with them. Several meetings were held and the plan of the Society grew apace.

INTRODUCTORY MEETING.

2. The next public step was on Saturday evening, January 8, 1910, when after all the plans had been most carefully completed, an introductory meeting for the formal organization of the Persian-American Educational Society was called at the Gareissen Studio (now the McNeal Studio), 1219 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D. C. A delightful musical program was interspersed between items of business and the delivery of addresses. A large and representative audience was present, including Mr. Charles Russell, then just appointed United States Minister to Persia. The Constitution and By-Laws of the new Society were read and the plan was enthusiastically approved. Officers were elected and the business of the Society began actively. The Washington newspapers, the "Star," the "Post," the "Times" and the "Herald," gave considerable space to the reports of the meeting. The Constitution and By-Laws were printed in a pamphlet which was widely distributed, and scholarships were subscribed in gratifying numbers.

MONTHLY BULLETIN.

OTHER STEPS TAKEN.

3. The increasing activities of the Society following this preliminary work soon suggested a larger field of usefulness. This being the first practical means of communication between Persia and the United States, inquiries began to come regarding American institutions, arts, manufactures and professions. In pursuit of these inquiries other steps have been taken which have already proven fruitful in a practical way, as will appear later on.

WASHINGTON CONFERENCE.

4. The Constitution of the Persian-American Educational Society provides for an annual Conference to be held in the city of Washington, D. C., or any other place which might be suggested by the Board of Directors. Accordingly, early in 1911 plans were started looking toward a conference which would be on a scale commensurate with the important work undertaken. Owing to the scope and nature of the movement permission was obtained from the trustees of the Public Library to hold the public sessions of the Conference in the spacious auditorium of that building.

NEWSPAPER PUBLICITY.

5. During the year which had elapsed since the establishment of the Society, its aims and plans had come to the attention of many prominent persons. The newspapers had been devoting considerable space to the work. Locally, the Washington Post, Star and Herald had published articles. The Woman's National Daily had a half-page illustrated article. The foreign press was even more largely represented. Articles commendatory of the movement appeared, among others, in the following newspapers: Tcherre Nema of Egypt; Habiol Matin, of Calcutta, India; Tamaddon and Police, of Persia; and other progressive journals of Egypt, Turkey and Persia.

COMMENDATORY EXPRESSIONS.

6. Copies of the Constitution and By-laws submitted to prominent persons have brought commendatory expressions from many, among whom are Dr. David Starr Jordan, President of the Leland Stanford Junior University; Miss Jane Addams, of Chicago; Albert K. Smiley, of the Mohonk Lake Conference on International Arbitration; Dr. Lyman Abbott, of the Outlook; F. P. Keppel, Secretary of American Association for International Conciliation; James Brown Scott, Secretary Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; John Barrett, Director of Pan-American Union; P. C. Knox, Secretary of State; Prof. Morris Bloomfield, of Johns Hopkins University; Edward G. Brown, Professor of Oriental Languages in Cambridge University, London; Miss Mabel Boardman, of the Red Cross Association; John W. Foster, former Secretary of State; Senator H. C. Lodge; Senator Elihu Root; G. Bie Ravndal, American Consul-General in Constantinople; Dr. Talcott Williams, of Philadelphia Press; H. H. Topakayan, Persian Consul-General, New York City; Alfred H. Love, President and Editor of Universal Peace Union; J. H. DeForrest, of Sendai, Japan; Tunstall Smith, Secretary American Society for Judicial Settlement of International Disputes; Prof. Mohammed Barakatullah, Editor Islamic Fraternity, of Tokyo, Japan; S. M. Tewfik Bey, Director of Dabistan Iranian, Constantinople; Dr. Charles Eliot, President Emeritus of Harvard University; Louis P. Lochner, Secretary Association of Cosmopolitan Clubs; W. H. Short, Executive Secretary of New York Peace Society; G. Spiller, Honorable General Secretary, First Universal Races Congress, London; A. H. Baldwin, Bureau of Manufactures, Department of Commerce and Labor; besides the speakers at the Conference and many prominent people from all over the Orient, whose names are unfamiliar to the Western World.

CONFERENCE PUBLICITY.

7. This general approval, combined with the plan of broadening the Society into an international association, to be termed The Orient-Occident Unity, added to the importance of the Conference. An interesting feature was the presence in Washington at the time, of Ghodsia Khanoum, the first young woman of Persia to come to the United States for the purpose of completing her education. Her visit was accomplished under the direction of the Society, and at the Conference she was introduced to the American public. Illustrated interviews with Ghodsia Khanoum were published in the local newspapers of Washington, with the detailed news of the Conference. Later, in the "Baltimore Evening Sun," the "Baltimore American," the "Pittsburgh Post" and the "Pittsburgh Times," long illustrated interviews appeared, as Ghodsia Khanoum proceeded on her journey to Chicago. All these articles featured the Society and its work. In addition, the Conference was given liberal space by the "Christian Science Monitor," of Boston; the "Daily Kennebec Journal," Augusta, Maine; the "Aroostook Times," Maine; the "Oriental Review," New York City, "Collier's National Weekly," and in the "Daily Consular and Trade Reports," issued by the United States Bureau of Manufactures, Department of Commerce and Labor. An Arabic daily, "The Guide," of New York, also carefully reported the work of the Society, besides numerous other publications which were not received by the Society. This indicates the widespread interest taken in the movement inaugurated in a small way and developed up to this time, only through such channels as could be reached most readily in the absence of an endowment or other fund for expenses.

CHAIRMAN OF THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE.

8. The real work of the Conference was planned through the indefatigable efforts of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, to whom too much credit cannot be given for the services, freely rendered to the work, with its vast details and broad scope. The careful arrangements extended even to the decoration of the Hall, which was tastefully draped with Persian and American flags, interspersed with growing plants and decorative leaves. From Mr. Najib Hekimian, an Oriental merchant, costly rugs and interesting ornaments of historic and intrinsic value were obtained, giving an Oriental aspect to the Auditorium which was timely and educational.

EXHIBITION OF PERSIAN PRESS.

9. In an ante-room was gathered the very first exhibition of Persian newspapers and magazines ever assembled in America. The development of the press, a decidedly modern institution incident to the constitutional form of government in Persia, was most interestingly shown. Cartoons of public men depicting the nations of the world in characteristic manner showed the trend of the Oriental mind toward modern methods if given but a small opportunity of development. In this room was also literature of peace societies and other public movements which had invited our co-operation, promising their own in return.

OTHER COMMITTEES.

10. Recognition should be given at this point to the Conference Committees to whose cooperation much of the success of the occasion is due. They are as follows:

Program Committee: Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Chairman; Joseph H. Hannen, Arnauld Belmont. Resolutions Committee: Hooper Harris, Chairman; Prof. Hermann Schoenfeld, Wm. H. Hoar, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Stanwood Cobb. Reception Committee: Mrs. Marian Hotchkiss, Chairman; Mrs. Howard S. Reeside, Mrs. Wm. C. Beck, Mrs. Leonard H. Wilder, Miss Edith Grosvenor, Mrs. J. A. De Lagnel, Miss Elizabeth Hopper, Miss Helen Hotchkiss, Miss Margaret Green, and Miss Frances Herne. Hall Committee:

Arnauld Belmont, Chairman; Howard Struven, Mrs. E. C. Dunlap, F. J. Woodward, Miss Hebe Moore, and Miss Mary Little. Music Committee: Arthur D. Mayo, Chairman; Mrs. Walter Gawler, Mrs. Wm. T. Reed, Mrs. W. Gibbs, R. P. Backing, Miss Marion McFall, and Miss Lillian Koeckling. Press Committee: Mrs. Young-Withee, Chairman; Mirza Ahmad Sobrab, Joseph H. Hannen, Edwin C. Reed, Elizabeth C. Dunlop. Nominating Committee: Howard MacNutt, Chairman; Prof. Edward Getsinger, and Edward Struven.

OUR DEBT TO PERSIA.

11. The first session of the Conference was called to order at 10 A. M., Friday, June 16, 1911, with the President, Wm. H. Hoar, in the chair. Representatives of local clergy had been invited to open the meetings, and in pursuance of this provision, Rev. Wm. D. Moss pronounced the invocation. In his introductory address, President Hoar very fittingly selected for his subject, "What We Owe to Persia." He stated that the Persians are the purest examples of the stock from which we are descended, and detailed what Persians have done for America and the world, declaring that the philosophy of the great Socrates and Aristotle was largely influenced by Persian thought. It was shown to be entirely reasonable to trace to the influence of Persian civilization, much of our present religion, as the treatment of the Jews under the Persians was liberal, and enabled them to rebuild their temple, provided for their sacred manuscripts and thus preserved for the Christian World large parts of its old Testament Scriptures. Modern civilization was shown to owe much to its progenitors in past days, to say nothing of the wealth of Persian poetry and art which forms an enjoyable feature of our esthetic life today. Now that this ancient realm has come upon days of misfortune, it is clearly our duty, as outlined in this address, to help her in all possible ways, and the work of the Society thus deserves encouragement and general assistance. Attention was called to the fact that the Society is only in its second year, but in this time its membership and influence have advanced in a most encouraging manner and as its purposes—to establish closer and friendlier bonds between Persia and the United States—become better known, it will gain the support of the public.

THE EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG SHAH.

12. Mirza Ali Kuli Khan, Charge d'Affaires of Persia in the United States, was next on the program, his topic being "Modern Education in Persia." Being unable to be present, Mirza Khan sent a paper, which was read by the Secretary. He outlined in a most interesting manner the present educational methods being pursued in that country and the extent to which this is a factor in the gradual regeneration of the nation. He stated it as his belief that with the great reforms introduced by the new constitutional government, Persia will again attain to her former rank among the great nations of the earth, and in the near future regain all the power and affluence that once was hers. A feature of this address which proved most interesting to the audience, and was referred to by some of the speakers who followed, was a graphic description of the method being pursued in the education of the young Shah who is now but fourteen years old. This noble youth leads a busy life, devoting a surprising amount of time to modern education under progressive tutors; and at the same time democracy of life and thought are inculcated by reason of the fact that several young Persians, not of the nobility, are being educated with him. From the aptitude with which the youthful monarch has assimilated Western ideas and methods of thought, the people of the country have come to believe their ruler will be an actual leader in the awakening of the nation from its slumber of centuries.

WORLD STANDARD OF EDUCATION.

13. The next speaker, the Hon. Elmer Ellsworth Brown, Ph. D., U. S. Commissioner of Education, discussed "International Educational Relations." He started with the statement that America must learn from Persia in some

things, but it was equally true, Persia must look to this country for enlightenment on some subjects, and that "America heartily welcomes any effort on the part of Persia to learn whatever she may be able to teach." Dr. Brown asserted a world standard of education will some day be promulgated, and the United States will play an important part in bringing this about.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL OFFICE.

14. Dr. Brown hopes to see the establishment of an international office for educational information, conducted on the order of the Hague, in which all nations may have access to knowledge of methods of education in other countries and that the benefits to be derived from such interchange of ideas be fully realized. In conclusion, Dr. Brown unofficially but with a strong personal conviction, recommended that Persia send out a Commission to ascertain what is best in modern educational methods, assuring such a body of a welcome at the hands of the American Government, and free access to the best it can furnish.

PERSIA, RUSSIA AND ENGLAND.

15. Dr. Benjamin F. Trueblood, Secretary of the American Peace Society, held the attention of the audience most closely as he presented his topic: "Peace, the Keynote of the Orient." As an introductory statement, he said: "I have been in recent years especially interested in Persia. I have watched for a good while the gradual encroachments of two great nations, one from the North, and the other from everywhere else upon Persia, I wondered at one time whether Persia was not going to be crushed between the upper millstone of Russia and the lower millstone of Great Britain. I am glad to be able to say this morning that I think that danger has passed." He stated his belief that Persia now occupies a position in international relations where its stability seems assured. Dr. Trueblood expressed the opinion that the greatest contribution to the world given by the Orient is the inherent belief in peaceful relations between man and man. Before we taught them, the Chinese believed that the soldier occupies the lowest point on the ladder of social conditions. The greatest bar to the progress of the world has been race prejudice.

THE COMING OF A WORLD RACE.

16. Dr. Trueblood believes in giving each race a chance to show what it can do and predicts a great world race, which shall combine in unity and effectiveness all the great qualities of the present races. He called attention to the fallacy of the natural supremacy of one race over others, citing the triumph of the Japanese a few years ago as an example. The work of bringing different parts of the world into closer relations, through the exchange of ideas and educational methods, as contemplated by the Persian-American Educational Society, was highly endorsed.

PERSIAN WOMEN AND THE REVOLUTION.

17. The address of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, on "Persian Women," was one of the strong features of the Conference. The subject is one which has been for all time enshrouded in mystery to the Occidental, and Mirza Sohrab declared, at the outset, his inability to add much light so far as personal observation is concerned. This, however, would he offset by the presence of Ghodsia Khanoum, who could speak for herself and her sex. "From the deep slumber of centuries the Persian woman has arisen to assert her rights, to play her part in the civilized drama of mankind and to enroll her name upon the golden scroll of abiding fame," said Mirza Sohrab. He further suggested that since American women have set an example for their sisters beyond the sea, they are resolved to break down the conventions of centuries and drink of the cup of knowledge. Behind the frequent references in the press and on platform and rostrum, to the fact that there is a New Persia,

one must see that there is also the New Woman. One of the needs of the time in Persia is for American women to go over there, to help guide their Oriental sisters aright in their search for knowledge. There are splendid opportunities for professional women, and it is one of the objects of the Society to direct to the filling of this need, the right women from our land of liberty and opportunity. Then the speaker quoted at some length from Madam Ali Kuli Khan a description of her experiences with the women of Persia in their homes as she found them when traveling in that region. Their lives were described as being spent in useful and enlightening occupations; yet they longed for and needed freedom. As an indication of the spirit which dominates these ladies of Persia, mention was made of the fact that in the recent revolution in Tabriz, a large number of women were found fighting in the ranks, in the uniforms of the soldiers, having given their lives gladly for the preservation of their country. From such material one can surely predict great things, when once the inevitable opportunity is given them.

PERSIAN WOMEN AND FREEDOM.

18. Ghodsia Khanoum, of Teheran, Persia, was introduced as the next speaker, and her captivating manner, with her splendid command of English, at once won her the admiration and attention of the listeners. Describing the new era which is dawning for woman in Persia, and of which she is an example by reason of the fact of her having come to America, she stated that this advancement was due to education. That whereas under the old conditions the women had been denied freedom of travel, and had been obliged to go veiled whenever away from their homes, opportunities for education are now opening up, bring with them much needed advantages.

SECRETARY'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

19. The Report of the Secretary closed the first session of the Convention. This document is printed, in a pamphlet of fifty pages, with numerous illustrations, and constitutes an educational work of value, because of its exhibits and the material assembled on the subject of Persia and the educational work accomplished during the history of the Society. Extracts were read outlining progress made, and giving the Recommendations embraced in the report, and with the statement that printed copies might be obtained by all desiring them, the report was formally submitted to the Society and friends. Copies of this pamphlet are still available for general distribution, and may be had without charge by addressing the Society at its headquarters. The Recommendations are as follows:

I. That the aims and objects of this Society, and its work, be merged into the Orient-Occident Unity, and this Society give up its existence as a corporate body to advance the larger work.

II. That a branch of the Orient-Occident Unity, a Persian-American Bureau be created, for the dissemination of facts concerning educational, commercial, and industrial opportunities.

III. That schools other than the Tarhiat be assisted, by the establishment of scholarships.

IV. That the establishment of new schools for girls as well as for boys, be encouraged.

V. That American physicians, nurses, engineers, dentists, and other professional men and women be encouraged to go to Persia and other parts of the Orient.

VI. That means be provided to bring Persian boys and girls to America for education along all lines.

VII. To encourage the formation of branches of the Society in various important cities in the Orient.

VIII. To spread a knowledge of Persia and its literature, as well as its commercial opportunities, in America.

IX. To secure more useful books for the Tarhiat Library in Teheran, and to establish in that city an English reading room with all the American magazines available for the use of the Persian press and public.

X. That the formation of a translation bureau in Teheran be encouraged.
 XI. To facilitate the formation of a Teacher's Association in Persia, as well as other countries in the Orient.

XII. That efforts be made to bring about the establishment of modern educational institutions; by assisting the Persian Government if this seems timely and necessary.

XIII. That statistics of the schools, number of pupils, etc., in Persia be collected as information and for guidance in further educational plans.

XIV. That the Persian Government be interested in sending an Educational and Commercial Commission to Europe and the United States, to study the educational methods of those countries and establish the same in Persia.

XV. That means be found to interest American manufacturers of agricultural, mining, textile and railway and other appliances and machinery, to open an Exposition of their wares in Teheran.

XVI. That means be found and plans devised to publish a Persian Monthly or Weekly Bulletin, portraying the educational, commercial and other advantages of America to the people of Persia.

XVII. That the needs of the Sehat Hospital in Teheran be considered, and supplied as soon as possible.

All these RECOMMENDATIONS are submitted to the officers of the new Orient-Occident Unity, upon their selection, and in order that they may know the wishes of the Persian-American Educational Society concerning the carrying on of the part of the work in which we have been most interested and which has obtained such an auspicious start.

CABLEGRAMS AND TELEGRAMS.

21. During the first session, the Secretary read messages of greeting sent by cable and telegraph from Teheran, Persia; Paris, France; New York City, Buffalo, N. Y.; Kenosha, Wis.; Montreal, Canada; Chicago, Ill.; Boston, Mass.; Philadelphia, Pa.; San Francisco, Pasadena, Point Loma, Oakland, Los Angeles, Tropico, Cal., and other points.

THE SECOND SESSION.

22. The second session was called to order at 3 P. M., Friday, June 16, with Mr. Howard MacNutt, of Brooklyn, N. Y., in the chair. The invocation was delivered by Rev. W. W. McMaster.

THE FUTURE OF PERSIA IS SAFE.

23. The opening address was delivered by Hooper Harris of New York, whose subject was: "Is Persia's Future Safe?" He answered the question decidedly in the affirmative. Extensive travels in the Orient, together with a notable ability to grasp the facts and a splendid power of expressing them, well qualify this speaker to render an expert opinion. He said that the Persian civilization was one of the oldest now extant; that it was not decadent, as is so frequently asserted, and that its future would possibly be more glorious than even its past.

BROTHERHOOD THROUGH COMMERCE.

24. Hon. C. S. Donaldson, Chief Consular Division, Bureau of Manufactures, next spoke on the subject of "Commercial Relations Between Persia and the United States." His opening statement was: "The glories of the ages have been those of conquest, of power and of authority. Cyrus, Caesar and Napoleon built great empires, but as they were founded and maintained by force of arms they could not endure. The present day witnesses a new sentiment becoming steadily stronger in the minds of men—the international conquest of hearts and the brotherhood of mankind." He outlined the responsibility and duty of America toward Persia in her present efforts in the direction of freedom and progress. The importation of Persian rugs, and their infinite superiority over any others, was instanced. Then statistics

were given showing the relatively small amount of direct imports from Persia, and the still smaller record of exports. It is evident that (1) much of the importation is done through European nations, and (2) that Europe enjoys a monopoly of the trade with Persia. But it is apparent that a new era is dawning, when our country can enjoy the benefit of the trade to which she is entitled, and Persia in turn can have the advantages offered by American goods. The activities of the Bureau of Manufactures were outlined, and reference was made to the fact that through cooperation with this Society, much had already been done, looking toward establishing correspondence between American manufacturers and Persian consumers.

AIMS OF THE ORIENTAL UNIVERSITY.

25. Prof. H. B. Holler, of the Oriental University, with headquarters in Washington, D. C., delivered an address outlining the "Aims of the Oriental University." This movement is a significant one in its object, to provide a means of intellectual interchange between the Orient and the Occident, indicating a plan looking toward the accomplishment of this object, apart from that of our Society.

MANY DELEGATES PRESENT.

26. Delegates were present from numerous societies and organizations having headquarters or branches in Washington, as well as from other cities. The Society itself was represented by members and delegates from New York, Chicago, Baltimore, points in New Jersey, beside the representation from Persia.

THE THIRD SESSION.

27. The Third Session was held on Saturday, June 17, at 10 A. M., with Mr. Hooper Harris in the chair. The invocation was pronounced by Rev. W. R. Wedderspoon.

WARNING TO PERSIA.

28. The significant subject: "Breakers Ahead of Persia," was presented most forcefully by Prof. Edward C. Getsinger, of Washington. This address was widely quoted in the newspapers. Prof. Getsinger said in part: "Persia is about to seek financial aid from the financiers of this country in an endeavor to rehabilitate itself in the affairs of civilized nations. But in so doing she has in view the idea of American humanitarian principles which have of recent years given protection to oppressed peoples. But Persia in this instance is liable to fall into a grave error should she ask financial aid of the trust magnates of this country. My patriotism sinks into insignificance beside that of my broad humanity for weak Persia, which is looking to us for guidance; consequently the impulse of that feeling of brotherhood ascends above patriotism when I voice a note of warning to my Persian brothers."

COMMERCIAL TREATY BETWEEN PERSIA AND AMERICA.

29. The next speaker was Howard MacNutt, of Brooklyn, New York, on the subject of "Reciprocity." He declared that the United States is the logical nation for Persia to establish intimate commercial relations with, being geographically so far removed and in consequence having no designs upon her territory, something which cannot be said of the European nations. Under trade agreements with the United States, dealings would be carried on in a neutral and non-partisan manner, and under the new constitutional form of government concessions granted the favored nations by Persia would be much more secure than under the former autocratic rule of the Shah. The speaker in a most interesting and instructive manner traced the history of the development of the world from conquest to commerce, and accentuated the present day tendency toward interdependence, inter-

communication and interwoven interests. He mentioned a number of needs of Persia which America can best supply, and that we in turn need a market for such articles. If the question be asked, "How can educational movements bring this about?" the answer is that education is needed as a basis of business, first, and then business as a basis of education.

PERSIA'S INTEGRITY.

30. Professor Hermann Schoenfeld, of George Washington University, discussed "Persia's International Relations." As a diplomat of long experience, this speaker was well chosen to present the important topic in the light of the present century, in which Persia has many international complications. In the opening of his scholarly address, he said: "Herodotus, the father of history, reports that the education of the Persian youth consisted of three things: To speak the truth, to be a good horseman, and to be a good archer. Upon those two principles, one of ethics, from which springs all the virtues of mind and the soul, and of personal bravery and manhood, the Persian empire was built up by her great kings, Cyrus and Darius Hystaspia." Continuing, he said "Persia cannot permit herself as a self-respecting nation, with her grand past, to be partitioned out by the good or illwill of the Powers." In order to preserve her integrity, he advised Persia that "Disorder must be eradicated root and branch, and Persia will stand as she has, for another 3000 years in splendor and glory, to enrich the world with her poets and thinkers, her scientists and unsurpassed artists, her nightingales and roses."

PERSIA AND THE CONSTITUTION.

31. Another interesting address was delivered by Mr. Henry C. Finkelstein, legal attache of the Persian Legation at Washington, on the subject of "Persia and the Constitution." The detailed information given was of particular interest, as indicating the conditions incident to the change from a despotic form of government to constitutionalism, and Mr. Finkelstein's legal acumen added a valuable contribution to the Conference. Toward the end of his address he pleaded strongly for the neutrality and integrity of Persia, and brought forward three incontrovertible reasons for taking such a position which greatly appealed to the audience and brought forth a generous applause, showing the unmistakable sympathy of all concerned.

AMERICA'S RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD THE ORIENT.

32. Professor Arnauld Belmont, of the Friends' Select School of Washington, D. C., ably presented the topic, "The Future of the Orient and the Responsibility of America." This speaker, who is an Oriental student of great ability, illuminated his subject most effectively, making it clear that America, the Cradle of Liberty, cannot afford to idly stand by while others who seek the boon she possesses are deprived. In education, one of the most powerful influences for good is presented.

ORIENT-OCCIDENT UNITY.

33. The presentation of the Constitution of the Orient-Occident Unity, which will in due season supersede the Persian-American Educational Society, closed the third session.

RECEPTION IN HONOR OF GHODSIA KHANOM.

34. Saturday afternoon, June 17, the social feature of the Conference was most successfully concluded. A reception was given to Ghodsia Khanom at Rauscher's Hall. Although the afternoon was inclement, the Hall was crowded with an assemblage typical of our best people. The floral decorations were ample and in the best taste. Delightful music was a feature of the afternoon, embracing piano solos, soprano solos and tenor

songs. An original poem, written for the Orient-Occident Unity, was read by Mr. Jos. H. Hannen. Following this informal program, the ladies of the reception committee formed into line, and all present met the guest of honor. Persian refreshments were served, completing a delightful afternoon.

THE CONCLUDING SESSION.

35. At the closing session, Saturday evening, June 17th, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab was in the chair. He pleaded inexperience, but proved to be a most witty and resourceful occupant of the place, lending dignity to the occasion and at the same time completing the bond between the speakers and the audience, which it is the province of a chairman to furnish.

UNITED STATES A LEADER IN WORLD AMITY.

36. The first speaker of the evening was United States Senator Theodore E. Burton, of Ohio. His subject, "The Future International Policies of the United States," was of great importance, and was handled in a fearless and direct manner. Senator Burton directed attention to the advance in civilization in the world in the past ten years, declaring that progress in that period almost eclipsed that of the hundred years preceding it. He detailed the attainment of the popular election of half the Imperial Council in autocratic Russia, the representative government established in Persia, Turkey and India, the abolition of slavery in China, together with plans for a general legislature and the establishment of a Republic in Portugal, asserting that all these evolutions are proof of the supremacy of American ideas in which they had their inception. Universal amity, with the United States as a leading factor, was predicted by Senator Burton in his address, which was frequently interrupted by long applause, and was listened to by the largest audience of the Conference, which, in fact, filled to overflowing the spacious auditorium of the Public Library.

WHERE IS PERSIA?

37. An instructive paper, entitled "Where is Persia?" was read by Mrs. L. J. Young-Withee, of the League of American Pen Women. In a manner which bespoke her familiarity with the situation, she made the location, political and physical geography, opportunities and needs of this great realm clear to the hearers. Striking points made were the vast undeveloped mineral resources and great agricultural riches and the almost total lack of modern advantages in the land of the Lion and the Sun. Only one line of railroad but a few miles long exists in the whole kingdom. Great opportunities for American commerce, to which education will open the door, were made apparent.

"PERSIA THE LAND OF THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE ROSE."

38. Mirza S. M. Raffie, of Persia, now connected with the Columbia University, New York City, delivered the closing address of the Conference. His subject was "Persia, the Land of the Nightingale and the Rose," and the lecture was illustrated by more than a hundred colored slides. He told of the manifold beauties of his native land, its snow-capped mountains, its silvery lakes, its turquoise mines, and the magical Persian Gulf. "I can assure the people of the United States that Persia is well worth their attention," he declared. "We have a beautiful land, which supports 15,000,000 of people, and its area is fully one-fifth as large as this nation. We are not decadent, and are really ready to welcome whatever of value the modern world of Europe and America can give us. In reaching our vast resources we have only six miles of railroad. I have seen coal selling at \$20 a ton in Teheran, although our coal mines are the wonder of Asia Minor. If we had a real railroad system, coal would sell at \$2 a ton in the capital. Our cotton and silk is the best in the world, and sells at a higher price than any other."

CABLEGRAMS AND RESOLUTIONS.

39. At the conclusion, cablegrams to be sent to the Shah, the Parliament and the Persian newspaper "Iran Nou" were read, and the following resolutions were adopted:

"Whereas, The sentiment of the age favors the establishment of closer bonds of friendship between the different members of the human family for their mutual advantage and in the interest of universal progress; therefore, be it

"Resolved, That this Society holds itself in readiness to co-operate with every organization and movement tending to create friendlier relations between the people of the Orient and the Occident.

"Whereas, The settlement of international differences by means other than war is rapidly coming to be recognized as a principle of modern civilization; therefore, be it

"Resolved, That this Conference endorses the action of President Taft and Sir Edward Grey in endeavoring to establish a treaty between the United States and Great Britain, providing for unlimited arbitration.

"Whereas, The people of Persia are at this time engaged in a noble effort to establish their new constitutional government upon a firm political, commercial and financial basis; therefore, be it

"Resolved, That this Conference favors and will do all in its power to bring about closer commercial and financial relations between Persia and the United States.

"Whereas, The Persian Government asked for the appointment of a Commission of Financial Advisers by this country to assist them in the reconstruction of its financial system, and such Commission has been appointed and is now in Persia; therefore, be it

"Resolved, That this Conference sincerely endorses the appointment of this Commission and confidently expects that it will be completely successful in its labors.

"Whereas, At the present time the spread of public education in Persia is of primal importance to the people of that country and to the world; therefore, be it

"Resolved, That this Conference endorses the suggestion made during the course of its deliberations by Dr. Elmer Ellsworth Brown, Commissioner of Education of the United States, and recommends the appointment by the Persian Parliament of an educational commission to visit this country to study its public school system.

"Whereas, At the present time Persia, Japan and China have no diplomatic relations with one another; therefore, be it

"Resolved, That this Conference suggests to these three countries the establishment of such diplomatic relations.

"Whereas, The interests of Persia and Turkey are closely interwoven and their territory adjacent; therefore, be it

"Resolved, That it is the sincere desire of this Conference that their interests be entirely reconciled and hearty cooperation established between them.

"Resolved, That the recommendations embodied in the Report of the Secretary of the Persian-American Educational Society are hereby adopted.

"Resolved, That the Secretary be directed to send copies of these resolutions to the Charge d'Affaires of Persia in this country, with the request that he officially forward copies of the same to the Persian Parliament and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

"Resolved, That we hereby record our sincere thanks and hearty appreciation of the kindness of the Trustees of the Public Library in permitting us to hold the sessions of our Conference in the Lecture Hall of this splendid building.

"Resolved, That this Conference offer a vote of thanks to our President, Mr. William H. Hoar, for his able work in furthering the aims of this Society.

"Resolved further, That this Conference record its appreciation of the untiring efforts and effective work of its Secretary, Joseph H. Hannen, in the preparation of his Report and in the business of the Conference.

"Resolved, That the name Persian-American Educational Society be retained; and

"Be it further resolved, That another Conference be called at the discretion of the officers of the Society, and that in the meantime the plan for the organization of The Orient-Occident Unity be perfected, to be presented at that Conference for adoption.

"It is hereby further resolved, That we express and record our gratitude to our Persian brother and friend, Mirza Ahmad Sobrab, for his untiring energy in furnishing the information and attending to the innumerable details so indispensable to the work of the Society and the success of this Conference."

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

40. The Nominating Committee reported the selection of officers for the ensuing year, who were thereupon elected by unanimous vote. The list of the officers appears elsewhere herein.

PERSIAN-AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY.

41. It was determined to continue the Persian-American Educational Society until the formation of the Orient-Occident Unity can be completed; meanwhile memberships in the Society will be recorded, and should the merger occur during the year, all members will have equal privileges in the new association, while the scholarships will be continued without change under any new plan of work.

PERSIAN-AMERICAN COMMERCIAL COMPANY.

42. Since the Conference much valuable publicity work has been done, and the latest achievement reported is perhaps the most important of any, i. e., a company has been formed in Tabriz to import American manufactured articles. The capital of \$19,000 is nearly subscribed. This is a direct fruit of the work of the Society and one upon which its members may well be congratulated. It means much for the future of both countries, as has been developed in the Report of the Conference of June, 1911. The announcement of the organization of this company is quoted herein, as it has appeared in the Daily Consular and Trade Report of August 15, 1911, under the heading of "Persian-American Commerce:"—

"With further reference to the development of commercial relations between the United States and Persia, the Bureau of Manufactures is in receipt of a copy of the following letter which has reached the Persian-American Educational Society, and which was dated at Tabriz, June 26, 1911.

"Last week we wrote you a letter enclosing an order for a paper export house of the United States, which we hope has been attended to accordingly, and that the papers will be shipped to the enclosed address. After receiving many catalogues from various factories in the United States, through your introduction and activity, and after having read the many letters of encouragement from that organization to the effect that we may make an effort to organize a company, and through commerce bring these two countries nearer together, we have for the last few months considered this matter very carefully, and the result of our deliberation was culminated in a gathering two weeks ago, wherein a number of prominent merchants gathered together and have laid the foundation for the organization of the Persian-American Commercial Company. We are going to issue 1900 shares of stock costing \$10 each. The shares of stock are printed, and the majority of the stockholders have already subscribed. As soon as we have attended to the details of the organization, the office and the officers of the Company will be announced. There are fourteen prominent and well-to-do merchants who are the promoters and organizers of this Company, and the work will be supervised by them. Although we desire to wait until we have completed the details, yet they gave me the permission to give you the glad news, and from now on we are awaiting for the initiation and the program to be outlined by your Society for our guidance. Many American factories have

sent their catalogues, but these catalogues are not accompanied by their price lists. They have asked us through their personal letters to become their agents, and that they will give us the usual commission for selling their goods. You may, however, announce, or if you deem advisable, we will announce through the American Consul of this city, our standing and capital, then the factories may send their goods to us and we will sell for them accordingly. The most important thing to make this Company a success is to have here on the ground a general American machinist, who may come here to reside and direct the management of the work. The first line of goods that is very useful for this part of the world, and will sell very quickly, is the modern pumps. Another thing that we want to know is the cost of transportation from America to this city. Another matter to be considered is to ship the goods directly to Tabriz, so that they may not become liable to double duty in the custom houses of Russia and Persia. The lines of goods which are useful in these parts are sewing machines, textile goods and woolen, cotton, and linen cloth; samples should be sent to us. In regard to the catalogues of agricultural machinery, pumps, sewing machines, incubators, general electrical appliances, railroad engines, we desire to get the price list with them, because the distance is so great that it takes a long time for correspondence. We hope that the manufacturers will send to us from time to time their general catalogues so that we may be in touch with them continually. The opportunities are great for commercial expansion, and our Company, with the assistance and help of the Persian-American Educational Society, will be able to open a great field for the American goods."

A WORD OF APPRECIATION.

43. In closing this story the following statement from a letter by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab to the members of the Society is fittingly quoted:

"The Conference of the Persian-American Educational Society was one of the most notable events in the annals of international gatherings. From its platform men high in the councils of nations discussed freely and frankly the future of Persia and the establishment of closer relations between Persia and America. A Senator of the United States, several officials of the Government, and prominent university men, have, through the recent Conference, come out openly in espousal of Persian freedom and national independence. The addresses delivered bespoke great scholarship and marked ability in handling the various subjects. For several days the press was busy reporting the plans discussed and the programs outlined at the Conference, and this gave to the gathering a national and international scope and dignity.

"I desire to express my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all those near and far friends, who, through every possible means, have contributed to make this first Conference between Persia and America a most memorable event. Hundreds of encouraging letters have been received from all parts of the country, and the kind words expressed therein sustained us most wonderfully through many periods of difficulty and discouragement. Friends! You have given us the best proof of your interest, I say, you have accomplished a great service—a most wonderful service—the results of which will be discussed for months, nay, rather, for years throughout the length and breadth of Persia, especially, and the East generally. The wonderful press and the great orators of that country will spread like wildfire every word and action of this Conference to every city and hamlet. They will be encouraged and inspired to go forward with the great task of the regeneration of their country, because they have found a responsive voice, a loving voice, from the sympathetic heart of free and glorious America. All that I can say to you—you who have made possible this Conference—is this: You have served well the land which is the birthplace of the Aryan race—your birthplace. You inaugurated a new era in the relations of Persia and America. You placed a vibrating, dynamic heart in the breasts of those Persians who are working for the betterment of their country, the result of which will be the universal civilization of the world. Hail to you, my friends! You have arisen unselfishly to accomplish this work; to lay the

foundation of this edifice, and to rear the mighty walls of this palace of world-wide amity. Without your support nothing could be accomplished; without your assistance and enthusiastic approval, the officers of the Society could perform less than nothing. Friends! We all thank you for the realization of this dream. You have helped us to work with you and to pave the way. Now let us all work hand in hand for the common good. In unity there is strength! In concentration of purpose there is power! In rugged determination there is victory! In the fulfilment of our duty there is the joy of heaven! In the accomplishment of our aim there is added zeal! In working for the cause of humanity there is inspiration! In laying the foundation of this structure there is the future Palace of Peace, Harmony and Unity between nations and countries! May God assist all of us to serve our fellow men and to raise the banner of practical solidarity and interdependence amongst the people of the world!"

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